

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN I reached home, my sister was very curious to know all about Miss Havisham's, and asked a number of questions. And I soon found myself getting heavily bumped from behind in the nape of the neck and the small of the back, and having my face ignominiously shoved against the kitchen wall, because I did not answer those questions at sufficient length.

If a dread of not being understood be hidden in the breasts of other young people to anything like the extent to which it used to be hidden in mine—which I consider probable, as I have no particular reason to suspect myself of having been a monstrosity—it is the key to many reservations. I felt convinced that if I described Miss Havisham's as my eyes had seen it, I should not be understood. Not only that, but I felt convinced that Miss Havisham too would not be understood; and although she was perfectly incomprehensible to me, I entertained an impression that there would be something coarse and treacherous in my dragging her as she really was (to say nothing of Miss Estella) before the contemplation of Mrs. Joe. Consequently, I said as little as I could, and had my face shoved against the kitchen wall.

The worst of it was that that bullying old Pumblechook, preyed upon by a devouring curiosity to be informed of all I had seen and heard, came gaping over in his chaise-cart at tea time, to have the details divulged to him. And the mere sight of the torment, with his fishy eyes and mouth open, his sandy hair inquisitively on end and his waistcoat heaving with windy arithmetic, made me vicious in my reticence.

"Well, boy," Uncle Pumblechook began, as soon as he was seated in the chair of honour by the fire. "How did you get on up town?"

I answered "Pretty well, sir," and my sister shook her fist at me.

"Pretty well?" Mr. Pumblechook repeated. "Pretty well is no answer. Tell us what you mean by pretty well, boy?"

Whitewash on the forehead hardens the brain into a state of obstinacy perhaps. Anyhow, with whitewash from the wall on my forehead, my obstinacy was adamantine. I reflected for

some time, and then answered as if I had discovered a new idea, "I mean pretty well."

My sister with an exclamation of impatience was going to fly at me—I had no shadow of defence, for Joe was busy in the forge—when Mr. Pumblechook interposed with "No! Don't lose your temper. Leave this lad to me, ma'am; leave this lad to me." Mr. Pumblechook then turned me towards him, as if he were going to cut my hair, and said :

"First (to get our thoughts in order): Forty-three pence?"

I calculated the consequences of replying "Four Hundred Pound," and, finding them against me, went as near the answer as I could—which was somewhere about eightpence off. Mr. Pumblechook then put me through my pence-table from "twelve pence make one shilling," up to "forty pence make three and four pence," and then triumphantly demanded, as if he had done for me, "Now! How much is forty-three pence?" To which I replied, after a long interval of reflection, "I don't know." And I was so aggravated that I almost doubt if I did know.

Mr. Pumblechook worked his head like a screw to screw it out of me, and said, "Is forty-three pence seven and sixpence three farthings, for instance?"

"Yes!" said I. And although my sister instantly boxed my ears, it was highly gratifying to me to see that the answer spoilt his joke, and brought him to a dead stop.

"Boy! What like is Miss Havisham?" Mr. Pumblechook began again when he had recovered; folding his arms tight on his chest and applying the screw.

"Very tall and dark," I told him.

"Is she, uncle?" asked my sister.

Mr. Pumblechook winked assent; from which I at once inferred that he had never seen Miss Havisham, for she was nothing of the kind.

"Good!" said Mr. Pumblechook, conceitedly. ("This is the way to have him! We are beginning to hold our own, I think, Mum?")

"I am sure, uncle," returned Mrs. Joe, "I wish you had him always: you know so well how to deal with him."

"Now, boy! What was she a doing of, when you went in to-day?" asked Mr. Pumblechook.

"She was sitting," I answered, "in a black velvet coach."

Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe stared at one

another—as they well might—and both repeated. "In a black velvet coach?"

"Yes," said I. "And Miss Estella—that's her niece, I think—handed her in cake and wine at the coach-window, on a gold plate. And we all had cake and wine on gold plates. And I got up behind the coach to eat mine, because she told me to."

"Was anybody else there?" asked Mr. Pumblechook.

"Four dogs," said I.

"Large or small?"

"Immense," said I. "And they fought for veal cutlets out of a silver basket."

Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe stared at one another again, in utter amazement. I was perfectly frantic—a reckless witness under the torture—and would have told them anything.

"Where *was* this coach, in the name of gracious?" asked my sister.

"In Miss Havisham's room." They stared again. "But there weren't any horses to it." I added this saving clause, in the moment of rejecting four richly caparisoned coursers which I had had wild thoughts of harnessing.

"Can this be possible, uncle?" asked Mrs. Joe. "What can the boy mean?"

"I'll tell you, Mum," said Mr. Pumblechook. "My opinion is, it's a sedan-chair. She's flighty, you know—very flighty—quite flighty enough to pass her days in a sedan-chair."

"Did you ever see her in it, uncle?" asked Mrs. Joe.

"How could I?" he returned, forced to the admission, "when I never see her in my life? Never clapped eyes upon her!"

"Goodness, uncle! And yet you have spoken to her?"

"Why, don't you know?" said Mr. Pumblechook, testily, "that when I have been there, I have been took up to the outside of her door, and the door has stood ajar, and she has spoke to me that way. Don't say you don't know that, Mum. However, the boy went there to play. What did you play at, boy?"

"We played with flags," I said. (I beg to observe that I think of myself with amazement, when I recal the lies I told on this occasion.)

"Flags!" echoed my sister.

"Yes," said I. "Estella waved a blue flag, and I waved a red one, and Miss Havisham waved one sprinkled all over with little gold stars, out at the coach-window. And then we all waved our swords and hurrahed."

"Swords!" repeated my sister. "Where did you get swords from?"

"Out of a cupboard," said I. "And I saw pistols in it—and jam—and pills. And there was no daylight in the room, but it was all lighted up with candles."

"That's true, Mum," said Mr. Pumblechook, with a grave nod. "That's the state of the case, for that much I've seen myself." And then they both stared at me, and I with an obtrusive show of artlessness on my countenance, stared at them, and plaited the right leg of my trousers with my right hand.

If they had asked me any more questions I should undoubtedly have betrayed myself, for I was even then on the point of mentioning that there was a balloon in the yard, and should have hazarded the statement but for my invention being divided between that phenomenon and a bear in the brewery. They were so much occupied, however, in discussing the marvels I had already presented for their consideration, that I escaped. The subject still held them when Joe came in from his work to have a cup of tea. To whom my sister, more for the relief of her own mind than for the gratification of his, related my pretended experiences.

Now, when I saw Joe open his blue eyes and roll them all round the kitchen in helpless amazement, I was overtaken by penitence; but only as regarded him—not in the least as regarded the other two. Towards Joe, and Joe only, I considered myself a young monster, while they sat debating what results would come to me from Miss Havisham's acquaintance and favour. They had no doubt that Miss Havisham would "do something" for me; their doubts related to the form that something would take. My sister stood out for "property." Mr. Pumblechook was in favour of a handsome premium for binding me apprentice to some genteel trade—say, the corn and seed trade for instance. Joe fell into the deepest disgrace with both, for offering the bright suggestion that I might only be presented with one of the dogs who had fought for the veal-cutlets. "If a fool's head can't express better opinions than that," said my sister, "and you have got any work to do, you had better go and do it." So he went.

After Mr. Pumblechook had driven off, and when my sister was washing up, I stole into the forge to Joe, and remained by him until he had done for the night. Then I said, "Before the fire goes quite out, Joe, I should like to tell you something."

"Should you, Pip?" said Joe, drawing his shoeing-stool near the forge. "Then tell us. What is it, Pip?"

"Joe," said I, taking hold of his rolled-up shirt sleeve, and twisting it between my finger and thumb, "you remember all that about Miss Havisham's?"

"Remember?" said Joe. "I believe you! Wonderful!"

"It's a terrible thing, Joe; it ain't true."

"What are you telling of, Pip?" cried Joe, falling back in the greatest amazement. "You don't mean to say it's—"

"Yes I do; it's lies, Joe."

"But not all of it? Why sure you don't mean to say, Pip, that there was no black velvet co—eh?" For, I stood shaking my head. "But at least there was dogs, Pip. Come, Pip," said Joe, persuasively, "if there warn't no veal-cutlets, at least there was dogs?"

"No, Joe."

"A dog?" said Joe. "A puppy? Come?"

"No, Joe, there was nothing at all of the kind."

As I fixed my eyes hopelessly on Joe, Joe

contemplated me in dismay. "Pip, old chap! this won't do, old fellow! I say! Where do you expect to go to?"

"It's terrible, Joe; an't it?"

"Terrible?" cried Joe. "Awful! What possessed you?"

"I don't know what possessed me, Joe," I replied, letting his shirt sleeve go, and sitting down in the ashes at his feet, hanging my head; "but I wish you hadn't taught me to call Knaves at cards, Jacks; and I wish my boots weren't so thick nor my hands so coarse."

And then I told Joe that I felt very miserable, and that I hadn't been able to explain myself to Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, who were so rude to me, and that there had been a beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's who was dreadfully proud, and that she had said I was common, and that I knew I was common, and that I wished I was not common, and that the lies had come of it somehow, though I didn't know how.

This was a case of metaphysics, at least as difficult for Joe to deal with, as for me. But Joe took the case altogether out of the region of metaphysics, and by that means vanquished it.

"There's one thing you may be sure of, Pip," said Joe, after some rumination, "namely, that lies is lies. However they come, they didn't ought to come, and they come from the father of lies, and work round to the same. Don't you tell no more of 'em, Pip. *That* ain't the way to get out of being common, old chap. And as to being common, I don't make it out at all clear. You are uncommon in some things. You're uncommon small. Likewise you're a uncommon scholar."

"No, I am ignorant and backward, Joe.

"Why, see what a letter you wrote last night. Wrote in print even! I've seen letters—Ah! and from gentlefolks!—that I'll swear weren't wrote in print," said Joe.

"I have learnt next to nothing, Joe. You think much of me. It's only that."

"Well, Pip," said Joe, "be it so or be it son't, you must be a common scholar afore you can be a uncommon one, I should hope! The king upon his throne, with his crown upon his ed, can't sit and write his acts of Parliament in print, without having begun, when he were a unpromoted Prince, with the alphabet—Ah!" added Joe, with a shake of the head that was full of meaning, "and begun at A too, and worked his way to Z. And I know what that is to do, though I can't say I've exactly done it."

There was some hope in this piece of wisdom, and it rather encouraged me.

"Whether common ones as to callings and earnings," pursued Joe, reflectively, "mightn't be the better of continuing for to keep company with common ones, instead of going out to play with uncommon ones—which reminds me to hope that there were a flag perhaps?"

"No, Joe."

"(I'm sorry there weren't a flag, Pip.) Whether that might be or mightn't be, is a thing as can't be looked into now, without putting your

sister on the Rampage; and that's a thing not to be thought of as being done intentional. Looke here, Pip, at what is said to you by a true friend. Which this to you the true friend say. If you can't get to be uncommon through going straight, you'll never do it through going crooked. So don't tell no more on 'em, Pip, and live well and die happy."

"You are not angry with me, Joe?"

"No, old chap. But bearing in mind that them were which I meandersay of a stunning and outdacious sort—alluding to them which bordered on weal-cutlets and dog-fighting—a sincere well-wisher would advise, Pip, their being dropped into your meditations when you go up-stairs to bed. That's all, old chap, and don't never do it no more."

When I got up to my little room and said my prayers, I did not forget Joe's recommendation, and yet my young mind was in that disturbed and unthankful state, that I thought long after I laid me down, how common Estella would consider Joe, a mere blacksmith: how thick his boots, and how coarse his hands. I thought how Joe and my sister were then sitting in the kitchen, and how I had come up to bed from the kitchen, and how Miss Havisham and Estella never sat in a kitchen, but were far above the level of such common doings. I fell asleep recalling what I "used to do" when I was at Miss Havisham's; as though I had been there weeks or months, instead of hours, and as though it were quite an old subject of remembrance, instead of one that had arisen only that day.

That was a memorable day to me, for it made great changes in me. But, it is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it, and think how different its course would have been. Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day.

CHAPTER X.

The felicitous idea occurred to me a morning or two later when I woke, that the best step I could take towards making myself uncommon was to get out of Biddy everything she knew. In pursuance of this luminous conception I mentioned to Biddy when I went to Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's at night, that I had a particular reason for wishing to get on in life, and that I should feel very much obliged to her if she would impart all her learning to me. Biddy, who was the most obliging of girls, immediately said she would, and indeed began to carry out her promise within five minutes.

The Educational scheme or Course established by Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt may be resolved into the following synopsis. The pupils ate apples and put straws up one another's backs, until Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt collected her energies, and made an indiscriminate totter at them with a birch-rod. After receiving the charge with every mark of derision, the pupils formed in

line and buzzingly passed a ragged book from hand to hand. The book had an alphabet in it, some figures and tables, and a little spelling—that is to say, it had had once. As soon as this volume began to circulate, Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt fell into a state of coma; arising either from sleep or a rheumatic paroxysm. The pupils then entered among themselves upon a competitive examination on the subject of Books, with the view of ascertaining who could tread the hardest upon whose toes. This mental exercise lasted until Biddy made a rush at them and distributed three defaced Bibles (shaped as if they had been unskillfully cut off the chump-end of something), more illegibly printed at the best than any curiosities of literature I have since met with, speckled all over with ironmould, and having various specimens of the insect world smashed between their leaves. This part of the Course was usually lightened by several single combats between Biddy and refractory students. When the fights were over, Biddy gave out the number of a page, and then we all read aloud what we could—or what we couldn't—in a frightful chorus; Biddy leading with a high shrill monotonous voice, and none of us having the least notion of, or reverence for, what we were reading about. When this horrible din had lasted a certain time, it mechanically awoke Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt, who staggered at a boy fortuitously and pulled his ears. This was understood to terminate the Course for the evening, and we emerged into the air with shrieks of intellectual victory. It is fair to remark that there was no prohibition against any pupil's entertaining himself with a slate or even with the ink (when there was any), but that it was not easy to pursue that branch of study in the winter season, on account of the little general shop in which the classes were holden—and which was also Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's sitting-room and bed-chamber—being but faintly illuminated through the agency of one low-spirited dip-candle and no snuffers.

It appeared to me that it would take time, to become uncommon under these circumstances: nevertheless, I resolved to try it, and that very evening Biddy entered on our special agreement, by imparting some information from her little catalogue of Prices, under the head of moist sugar, and lending me, to copy at home, a large old English D which she had imitated from the heading of some newspaper, and which I supposed, until she told me what it was, to be a design for a buckle.

Of course there was a public-house in the village, and of course Joe liked sometimes to smoke his pipe there. I had received strict orders from my sister to call for him at the Three Jolly Bargemen, that evening, on my way from school, and bring him home at my peril. To the Three Jolly Bargemen, therefore, I directed my steps.

There was a bar at the Jolly Bargemen, with some alarmingly long chalk scores in it on the wall at the side of the door, which seemed to me

to be never paid off. They had been there ever since I could remember, and had grown more than I had. But there was a quantity of chalk about our country, and perhaps the people neglected no opportunity of turning it to account.

It being Saturday night, I found the landlord looking rather grimly at these records, but as my business was with Joe and not with him, I merely wished him good evening, and passed into the common room at the end of the passage, where there was a bright large kitchen fire, and where Joe was smoking his pipe in company with Mr. Wopsle and a stranger. Joe greeted me as usual with "Halloa, Pip, old chap!" and the moment he said that, the stranger turned his head and looked at me.

He was a secret-looking man whom I had never seen before. His head was all on one side, and one of his eyes was half shut up, as if he were taking aim at something with an invisible gun. He had a pipe in his mouth, and he took it out, and, after slowly blowing all his smoke away and looking hard at me all the time, nodded. So, I nodded, and then he nodded again, and made room on the settle beside him that I might sit down there.

But, as I was used to sit beside Joe whenever I entered that place of resort, I said "No, thank you, sir," and fell into the space Joe made for me on the opposite settle. The strange man, after glancing at Joe, and seeing that his attention was otherwise engaged, nodded to me again when I had taken my seat, and then rubbed his leg—in a very odd way, as it struck me.

"You was saying," said the strange man, turning to Joe, "that you was a blacksmith."

"Yes. I said it, you know," said Joe.

"What'll you drink, Mr. —? You didn't mention your name, by-the-by."

Joe mentioned it now, and the strange man called him by it. "What'll you drink, Mr. Gargery? At my expense? To top up with?"

"Well," said Joe, "to tell you the truth, I ain't much in the habit of drinking at anybody's expense but my own."

"Habit? No," returned the stranger, "but once and away, and on a Saturday night too. Come! Put a name to it, Mr. Gargery."

"I wouldn't wish to be stiff company," said Joe. "Rum."

"Rum," repeated the stranger. "And will the other gentleman originate a sentiment?"

"Rum," said Mr. Wopsle.

"Three Rums!" cried the stranger, calling to the landlord. "Glasses round!"

"This other gentleman," observed Joe, by way of introducing Mr. Wopsle, "is a gentleman that you would like to hear give it out. Our clerk at church."

"Aha!" said the stranger, quickly, and cocking his eye at me. "The lonely church, right out on the marshes, with the graves round it!"

"That's it," said Joe.

The stranger, with a comfortable kind of grunt over his pipe, put his legs up on the

settle that he had to himself. He wore a flapping broad-brimmed traveller's hat, and under it a handkerchief tied over his head in the manner of a cap: so that he showed no hair. As he looked at the fire, I thought I saw a cunning expression, followed by a half laugh, come into his face.

"I am not acquainted with this country, gentlemen, but it seems a solitary country towards the river."

"Most marshes is solitary," said Joe.

"No doubt, no doubt. Do you find any gypsies, now, or tramps, or vagrants of any sort out there?"

"No," said Joe; "none but a runaway convict now and then. And we don't find *them*, easy. Eh, Mr. Wopsle?"

Mr. Wopsle, with a majestic remembrance of old discomfiture, assented; but not warmly.

"Seems you have been out after such?" asked the stranger.

"Once," returned Joe. "Not that we wanted to take them, you understand; we went out as lookers-on; me, and Mr. Wopsle, and Pip. Didn't us, Pip?"

"Yes, Joe."

The stranger looked at me again—still cocking his eye, as if he were expressly taking aim at me with his invisible gun—and said, "He's a likely young parcel of bones that. What is it you call him?"

"Pip," said Joe.

"Christened Pip?"

"No, not christened Pip."

"Surname Pip?"

"No," said Joe, "it's a kind of a family name what he gave himself when a infant, and is called by."

"Son of yours?"

"Well," said Joe, meditatively—not, of course, that it could be in any wise necessary to consider about it, but because it was the way at the Jolly Bargemen to seem to consider deeply about everything that was discussed over pipes; "well—no. No, he ain't."

"Nevvy?" said the strange man.

"Well," said Joe, with the same appearance of profound cogitation, "he is not—no, not to deceive you he is *not*—my nevvy."

"What the Blue Blazes is he?" asked the stranger. Which appeared to me to be an inquiry of unnecessary strength.

Mr. Wopsle struck in upon that; as one who knew all about relationships, having professional occasion to bear in mind what female relations a man might not marry; and expounded the ties between me and Joe. Having his hand in, Mr. Wopsle finished off with a most terrifically snarling passage from Richard the Third, and seemed to think he had done quite enough to account for it when he added "—as the poet says."

And here I may remark that when Mr. Wopsle referred to me, he considered it a necessary part of such reference to rumple my hair and poke it into my eyes. I cannot conceive why everybody of his standing who visited

at our house should always have put me through the same inflammatory process under similar circumstances. Yet I do not call to mind that I was ever in my earlier youth the subject of remark in our social family circle, but some large-handed person took some such ophthalmic steps to patronise me.

All this while the strange man looked at not body but me, and looked at me as if he were determined to have a shot at me at last, and bring me down. But he said nothing after offering his Blue Blazes observation until the glasses of rum-and-water were brought; and then he made his shot, and a most extraordinary one it was.

It was not a verbal remark, but a proceeding in dumb-show, and was pointedly addressed to me. He stirred his rum-and-water pointedly at me, and he tasted his rum-and-water pointedly at me. And he stirred it and he tasted it: not with a spoon that was brought to him, but *with a file*.

He did this so that nobody but I saw the file; and when he had done it he wiped the file and put it in a breast-pocket. I knew it to be Joe's file, and I knew that he knew my convict the moment I saw the instrument. I sat gazing at him, spell-bound. But he now reclined on his settle, taking very little notice of me, and talking principally about turnips.

There was a delicious sense of cleaning-up and making a quiet pause before going on in life afresh, in our village on Saturday nights, which stimulated Joe to dare to stay out half an hour longer on Saturdays than at other times. The half-hour and the rum-and-water running out together, Joe got up to go, and took me by the hand.

"Stop half a moment, Mr. Gargery," said the strange man. "I think I've got a bright new shilling somewhere in my pocket, and if I have the boy shall have it."

He looked it out from a handful of small change, folded it in some crumpled paper, and gave it to me. "Yours!" said he. "Mind! Your own."

I thanked him, staring at him far beyond the bounds of good manners, and holding tight to Joe. He gave Joe good-night, and he gave Mr. Wopsle good-night (who went out with us), and he gave me only a look with his aiming eye—no, not a look, for he shut it up, but wonders may be done with an eye by hiding it.

On the way home, if I had been in a humour for talking, the talk must have been all on my side, for Mr. Wopsle parted from us at the door of the Jolly Bargemen, and Joe went all the way home with his mouth wide open, to rinse the rum out with as much air as possible. But I was in a manner stupefied by this turning up of my old misdeed and old acquaintance, and could think of nothing else.

My sister was not in a very bad temper when we presented ourselves in the kitchen, and Joe was encouraged by that unusual circumstance to tell her about the bright shilling. "A bad un, I'll be bound," said Mrs. Joe, triumphantly,

"or he wouldn't have given it to the boy ! Let's look at it."

I took it out of the paper, and it proved to be a good one. "But what's this?" said Mrs. Joe, throwing down the shilling and catching up the paper. "Two One-Pound notes?"

Nothing less than two fat sweltering one-pound notes that seemed to have been on terms of the warmest intimacy with all the cattle markets in the county. Joe caught up his hat again, and ran with them to the Jolly Bargemen to restore them to their owner. While he was gone, I sat down on my usual stool and looked vacantly at my sister : feeling pretty sure that the man would not be there.

Presently, Joe came back, saying that the man was gone, but that he, Joe, had left word at the Three Jolly Bargemen concerning the notes. Then my sister sealed them up in a piece of paper, and put them under some dried rose-leaves in an ornamental teapot on the top of a press in the state parlour. There, they remained, a nightmare to me, many and many a night and day.

I had sadly broken sleep when I got to bed, through thinking of the strange man taking aim at me with his invisible gun, and of the guiltily coarse and common thing it was, to be on secret terms of conspiracy with convicts—a feature in my low career that I had previously forgotten. I was haunted by the file too. A dread possessed me that when I least expected it, the file would reappear. I coaxed myself to sleep by thinking of Miss Havisham's, next Wednesday ; and in my sleep I saw the file coming at me out of a door without seeing who held it, and I screamed myself awake.

WONDERS OF THE SEA.

"THEY that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters," says the Psalmist, "these men see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep."

Three-fifths of the earth are covered deeply with water, the depths varying from a few fathoms to six or seven miles, or even more. According to some recent calculations made by observing the rate of motion of the tide wave (which varies with the depth), the average is about fifteen thousand feet in the Atlantic, and twenty thousand feet in the Pacific. This vast body of water is almost everywhere, and in all circumstances, similar in the nature of its contents. It possesses, also, a less variable temperature than the air or earth ; for the natural heat of the sea rarely or never exceeds 87° Fahrenheit in the hottest part of the tropics, and it is not often below the freezing point even in very high latitudes. Its colour, ascertained in some marine caves, where all the light that enters has passed through water and is reflected from a white bottom, is of the purest azure blue, proving that it transmits light, thus coloured, absorbing an excess of the other tints. When clear and exposed to strong light, it is transparent to a marvellous extent. At twenty-five fathoms (one hundred and fifty

feet) corals can frequently be seen at the bottom very distinctly, and the form of objects of various kinds has been recognised at more than double that depth in the West Indian seas. Submarine landscapes are thus not unknown, and have been described with glowing enthusiasm by various travellers.

When the great ocean is disturbed it forms surface waves, which are sometimes of great magnitude. In a gale, such waves have been more than once measured, and it is found that their extreme height from the top to the deepest depression of large storm waves, has been nearly fifty feet ; their length being from four to six hundred yards, and their rate of motion through the water about half a mile a minute. Such waves, breaking over an obstacle of any kind, or mingling strangely with the clouded atmosphere raging above, are the wildest, grandest, and most terrible phenomena of nature. When they approach land, they break up into much smaller bodies of water, but these are often lifted by shoals and obstructed by rocks till they are thrown up in masses of many tons to a height of more than a hundred feet. The tidal wave is another phenomenon of water motion of a somewhat different kind, producing an alternate rise and fall of the water over all parts of the ocean every twelve hours.

In addition to the true waves there are also many definite streams or currents of water conveying large portions of the sea from one latitude to another, modifying the temperature of the adjacent land, and producing a mixture of the waters at the surface or at some depth which cannot but be extremely conducive to the general benefit of all living beings. Storm tides, or those waves which occasionally rush without any pause along narrow and confined seas or up funnel-shaped inlets, have occasionally proved disastrous to a fearful extent. Thus it is recorded that upwards of one hundred thousand persons perished in the year 1232, and again in 1242, in this way, numerous complete villages and towns being washed away by a wave advancing from the North Sea over the low lands of Holland. Between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick the ordinary spring tide often rises to a height of a hundred feet, sweeping away the cattle feeding on the shore.

Fearful storms and hurricanes, recently called cyclones, torment the waters of the ocean, lashing them into foam, and tearing over the surface in wild spiral curves which nothing can resist. The events of the last eighteen months have, unfortunately, rendered these storms but too familiar on all our shores ; but they have also induced observations and investigations as to their proximate causes and prognostications, which bid fair to enable us some day to evade their worst consequences.

Vast blocks of ice, deeply buried in the water, float for thousands of miles through the ocean, after being detached, loaded with mud and stones, from Arctic and Antarctic land. Rocks from Greenland are thus brought into the middle of the Atlantic, and these become mixed with

other rocks brought down by other drifts from very distant localities. Floating masses of ice greatly influence the climates both of Europe and America, and while in some respects the grandest are occasionally the most destructive monsters of the deep.

The inhabitants of the sea are varied and multiplied to an extent often little appreciated. All classes of animals there find representatives, and some are almost or entirely confined to water as the element in which they live and breathe. Of the mammals, or sucking animals, —the quadrupeds of every-day life—there are numerous examples, not less remarkable for their vast proportions than for their usefulness to man. The whales of all kinds haunt the open ocean, some of them being the largest animals in creation. The common whalebone whale, sixty feet long, and whose head alone measures twenty feet in length, weighs not less than seventy tons when in condition. This animal is unable to take within its capacious jaws any substance except the most minute and soft animal matter, and feeds on food apparently quite inadequate to sustain such gigantic life. Other whales are still larger and yet more strangely proportioned, and are supplied with different food, generally, however, cuttle-fish and other small animals. All kinds are capable of extremely rapid motion through the water, and, strange as they may seem, are admirably adapted to the element they inhabit. The pursuit of the whale, for the sake of its oil, is one of the most exciting of all fisheries, and is not unfrequently accompanied by great danger to those concerned. It is, however, a trade carried on by a large number of hardy navigators both European and American, and the search after new whale grounds has resulted occasionally in important geographical discoveries.

Other large and cumbersome animals, suckling their young and provided with at least the rudiments of arms and legs, though externally fish-like, are often met with in high latitudes, and occasionally characterise even tropical seas. Some of these, such as the seal and walrus, are quite distinct from the whales, while others approach the latter far more nearly in their structure. The dugong and the manatee are of this kind, and from their occasional habit of swimming with their calf-like heads out of the water, they have given rise to a large class of fables of fabulous animals of which the mermaid and perhaps the great sea-serpent may serve as illustrations. The larger seals, as well as these sea-cows (as the manatee is called), yield much valuable oil, and are killed off very rapidly for this purpose. More than three millions of seals are reported to have been taken on one group of islands in Behring Sea in the fifty years terminating in 1833, while nearly three-quarters of a million of seal-skins were wilfully destroyed by the Russian Fur Company in 1803 for the purpose of preventing a glut in the market. The walrus is a fiercer animal than the seal, and not unfrequently attacks its human enemies, but it generally falls. The white or polar bear

and the sea otter may also be regarded as marine animals, since they live almost entirely on or under the ice, where they obtain their food, rarely approaching land.

The birds that belong to the sea are very curious, and their numbers beyond all calculation. "Every naked rock or surf-beaten cliff that rises over the immeasurable deserts of ocean, is the refuge of myriads of sea-birds; every coast from the poles to the equator is covered with their legions, and far from the land their swarms hover over the solitudes of the deep."

The penguins are, perhaps, of all others the birds that most widely depart from the ordinary type of their class. Their wings are adapted exclusively for motion in water, and they swim with such rapidity and perseverance, with the head alone out of water, that they frequently overtake fishes in fair pursuit. They live in the sea, and have been met with a thousand miles from the nearest known land. The larger birds of this kind sometimes weigh as much as eighty pounds, and in their stomachs have been found ten pounds' weight of pebbles and large stones, swallowed, no doubt, to assist the gizzard to pound up the food submitted to its action.

The frigate-bird, the petrel, and the albatross, seem to range through the air over the whole extent of ocean from coast to coast of the Atlantic and Pacific. The pelican also, and the cormorant, are far more nearly dependent on water than land, and strictly belong to our present subject. They are all birds of powerful and rapid flight, feeding on fishes, and rarely seen far inland, though often stretching to great distances across wide expanses of sea. Thanks to them we have those accumulated masses of guano which help to fertilise our lands. Some idea of the extent of these masses may be obtained when it is stated that, on the island of Iquique alone, upwards of six millions of cubic feet of guano have been removed within the last thirty years, while in the year 1854, not less than half a million of tons were exported from the Chincha Islands.

Although there is no reliable evidence of the existence in the ocean of a gigantic reptile resembling a serpent, there are undeniably sea-snakes, poisonous, but of no large dimensions. Lizards also, three or four feet long, and inoffensive, are met with in the Pacific, and turtles of large size are common throughout the warmer seas, being occasionally drifted into cool latitudes. Green turtles from the West Indies, nearly half a ton in weight, and six feet long, have even been taken on our own shores. These animals live entirely at sea, only visiting warm shoals for the purpose of laying their eggs, which are hatched in the sun.

Reptiles were not always rare animals in the ocean, for we have in many rocks throughout Europe, abundant evidence of the former presence of gigantic marine animals of this class, rivalling in size and exceeding in voracity the largest existing inhabitants of the deep.

We are apt to look upon fishes as the only fit tenants of the water, and doubtless they are in

some respects the most characteristic of all, the strangest in form, and the most distinctly adapted to such a medium. Although, indeed, we find marine quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles, these involve exceptional modifications of the structure of animals which usually breathe air and move on land or through the atmosphere, while, on the other hand, it is a rare exception to find fishes capable of existing for more than a short time out of water; notwithstanding the flying-fish and the Pegasus that haunt the air, the perch that climbs trees, the frog-fish that can crawl about a room, the hassar that travels a whole night from one pool to another, or the goby that burrows deeply into clay.

Fishes breathe by means of the air contained in water, and are suffocated if their gills or breathing apparatus become dry. They move not only by fins and tail-contrivances of the nature of flexible oars well adapted to beat the water, but also by means of the wonderful flexibility of their bodies, which glide and slip through the water with perfect ease. Living in a medium of nearly the same specific gravity as themselves, they have scarcely any weight to support, and float at any depth without effort. Some, indeed, are usually limited to certain depths, but this seems rather for the sake of food than for any other reason.

They progress with a rapidity impossible to other animals whose density is so much greater than the medium they move through, as to require constant muscular effort to advance at all; and, thus we find that when a ship is sailing or steaming at its swiftest speed, fishes will quietly, and without apparent effort, swim round and round the ship as if she were at rest, and continue to accompany her from day to day for hundreds of miles. No words can do justice to the bright colours, the quaint and droll or ugly forms, or the singular appendages, of fishes.

The Ray of warm seas, with its broad flat angular body, twelve or fifteen feet wide, terminated by a tail five feet long armed with a sharp arrow point conveying poison to the wound it makes, is as unsightly and disagreeable an animal as can well be imagined, while the little sea-horse of the Mediterranean is in the highest degree picturesque, resembling the mediæval figures of a flying dragon. The globe-fish and porcupine-fish are bladders stuck all over with spines; the sun-fish resembles the head and shoulders of a larger animal cut off shortly and abruptly by some accident; the sea-wolf attains a length of six or eight feet, and has a formidable apparatus of teeth, compared with which even the alligator or the shark seems powerless; the sword-fish and saw-fish are provided with weapons capable of piercing and being completely buried in the keel of a ship; and a curious fish called the angler, or sea-devil, catches its food by means of a natural line, consisting of two slender appendages to the head, slightly flattened and broadened at the extremity, which, by their colour, attract the unwary prey while the owner is buried in mud or sand.

The sea is highly important as a never-failing

source of food to the human race; but few facts in the history of our race are more extraordinary than the prejudice which permits enormous quantities of this valuable food to be wasted and neglected where it is most plentiful. The lower classes in Ireland would, in many cases, rather starve than eat the fish with which their shores abound; and elsewhere the feeling with regard to particular kinds of fish is often so strong that no motive or hard necessity is sufficient to induce a hungry population to try the experiment of converting them into food.

But there are (as we all know) some kinds generally accepted, and of these the consumption is almost inconceivable. In shoals miles in length, and so thickly congregated that there is no room for a boat, the common herring rushes annually to the north-western coast of Europe, filling all the locks, fiords, and inlets from Norway to Normandy. More than half a million fish have been taken in one night by a single boat. Upwards of two hundred millions of fish have been exported in one year from one port in Sweden, and about four hundred sloops are employed in the herring trade at Yarmouth, three of which alone, belonging to the same proprietor, landed, in the year 1857, nearly four millions of fishes. Nor is the herring the only animal thus abundantly supplied; instances are on record of twenty-five millions of pilchards having been taken on shore in one port in a single day. Even of cod, a much larger fish, the quantity taken each season cannot average less than two hundred and fifty millions; and other fish, as the mackerel, the salmon, and the tunny, rank among the principal food at certain seasons of the year, of large populations of several European countries.

Nature has amply provided for this vast consumption and destruction of full grown fishes. The cod annually produces more than nine millions of eggs, and the sturgeon more than seven millions: while flat fish, mackerels, and herrings, all multiply by millions to maintain their kinds against their numerous enemies. There is no fear of the supply of fish failing out of the ocean, but almost all kinds, especially those which come in large multitudes at fixed seasons, are subject to occasional and apparently capricious wanderings. The varieties of temperature during different seasons, may, in some measure, account for this, but not entirely; and the open water habits of the animals require more study than has hitherto been devoted to them to enable us to determine many points in their natural history.

Fishes are chiefly obtained from near shore or in shallow water, but there is no reason to doubt that they occasionally occupy considerable depths. The crustaceans also—the crabs and lobsters, the shrimps and prawns and cray-fish—are met with either exclusively in the neighbourhood of land or in some of those great masses of seaweed that float in open water in the mid-Atlantic. Crustaceans are very curious animals. Commencing life with a head preposterously large in proportion to its size, the young crab emerges from the egg with a long forked tail but no body, and

occupies its time in turning head over heels till it casts its first covering and alters its proportions. The true and recognisable crab does not, however, even then appear: this singular form being at last elaborated after a series of changes and transformations which can only be likened to those of a pantomime. Of the crabs, some occupy their own mansions, which they leave periodically as their substance increases and requires larger accommodation: while others, not constructing houses for themselves, occupy shells which they seize for the occasion, and which would seem suitable enough if one may judge from the tenacity with which the tenant retains possession.

The lobster, the prawn, and the shrimp, are less varied in their habits. They all change their shells from time to time as they grow too large for them, and, during the period of change, conceal themselves in holes and mud.

The little complicated shells which, under the name of barnacles, adhere to ships' bottoms, or which, under the title of balanus, are found on every rock and on many shells by the sea-side, are also crustaceans. Many others exist, adding to the list of marine animals, and each is important in its own sphere.

Of annelids or worms, a few are strictly marine, and among these are some that are the most curious and most highly-coloured as well as the most puzzling of the creatures inhabiting salt water. The sea-mouse is one of them; the serpula, its tufted head projecting from a stony tube, is another; some, again, assume, for defence, particles of sand, shell, or stone: while others are able to pierce stone, and eat into almost any substance they come in contact with.

Of all annelids, none is, at the present time, more interesting than the unknown inhabitant of a little tube recently brought up from the sea bottom, beneath some two miles of water. At this vast depth, are living animals to be found, and among them are representatives of those who penetrate all organic substances in search of food. Let our telegraph companies tremble and endeavour to take precautions in time; for their wires, buried at the bottom of the sea, are pursued in mid-ocean by relentless foes bent on destruction.

Soft animals, often defended by shells, abound in the ocean, and form an important class of its inhabitants. The cuttle-fish is the emperor of such molluscs, and is represented in all seas by some worthy cousin. The cuttle-fish, or squid, of our own shores, ranges under various representative forms both in the Atlantic and Pacific, but there is one variety covered and protected by a chambered shell, the nautilus, which is confined to the southern seas. Few animals inhabiting the ocean are better adapted for attack or defence than these. They are often of large size; they have powerful jaws and beaks; very long arms, on which are suckers of a peculiar kind, holding fast to any object they touch, and many of them have a provision of dark

fluid which they eject into the water when they desire to obscure it, either to escape from enemies, or conceal themselves from their prey. Amongst the most unsightly, these animals are also the most highly organised and the most powerful of their class, and though only used locally, they are well adapted for human food. They are the last representatives of a group formerly much more important in the seas than they now are. The Ammonites fossil shells, familiar enough to most collectors, are the remains of extinct genera very closely allied to the nautilus, and they seem, at former times, to have played a very active part in the ocean.

Innumerable multitudes of naked soft animals, extremely varied in size and shape, brilliant in colour and of very peculiar habits, all belonging to the class mollusca, inhabit the ocean at various depths, and form a large part of the food of many important tribes of fishes. Nothing can be conceived more delicate and beautiful than some of them, no limit can be expressed in figures to their numbers, and they show a series of transitions from animals totally undefended, to others, such as the oyster, closely protected in a solid stone construction. The shells with which these creatures are fortified, are again as strangely varied and as singular as any productions of nature. Look at the spider shell, the cone, the cowry, the wentle-trap, the top-shell, the harp-shell, the Venus-shell, the clam, and a thousand others; watch them as the animal comes out from its coat of mail or puts forth its feelers in search of news and food. Examine the oyster in search of the pearl, follow the indication of the ship-worm or stone-piercer from the bored surface of the wood or stone, dredge for the shell containing the imperial purple dye, and endeavour to learn something of the rich treasures of the sea in this wonderful department. Be assured that the treasury is not easily exhausted. It will last your time and mine, and yield abundance of wealth "so long as the moon endureth."

There are some very curious shells found of late years in almost all seas, and distinguished from the ordinary kinds as much by a peculiar texture of the shell itself, as by an arrangement of the gills in the animal. The Terebratula is one of these, and it, like the cuttle-fish, is as interesting in reference to former time as to present existences. Terebratuliform shells and nautilus-like shells, in fact, are among the earliest records of creation in the various rocks containing fossils, and their remains are especially abundant in the oldest rocks. Modern species are found in our own seas generally at some depth.

Very minute compound animals, at one time regarded as polyps, but now referred to molusca, are sufficiently common among the sea-weeds on all shores, and float in open water, being not unfrequently phosphorescent. They glide sometimes through the sea in long chains of united animals, and they are exceedingly remarkable as illustrations of a method of suc-

cession not otherwise observable. A Salpa, as one of them is called, bears a marked resemblance to its parent or offspring two generations off, but never bears any resemblance to its own immediate parent or young. This singular and puzzling but well ascertained condition, extends to many animals, chiefly of low organisation.

Star-fishes, sea-urchins, and such-like creatures, are essentially marine. They owe their name to their divergent rays, covered often with spines and suckers, and they are exceedingly remarkable for their habits as well as their form. Such animals have lived during all time, and present many curious varieties of structure. Some are provided with stony plates fitting together and forming a defence; in ancient times these stony creatures were wonderfully varied and very common. The lily-stars, as some of them are called, are now nearly extinct.

There is a kind of snake-like star-fish very widely extended, and not very uncommon in our own seas, in which the long rays diverge from a compact centre, and twine themselves round any object with which they come in contact. Can the reader imagine the astonishment and delight of Dr. Wallack, the naturalist on board H.M.S. Bulldog, recently employed in sounding the ocean from Greenland to Labrador, when he saw clinging on "like grim death" to the lower extremity of a line that was being drawn up from an Atlantic depth of some fifteen hundred fathoms, an Ophioconia, or brittle-star of this kind, living still after the removal of the enormous pressure of water under which it had hitherto existed, and retaining the arms which in ordinary cases it throws off with singular facility when alarmed!

This, and a number of companion specimens brought up at the same time with the mud from the bottom, were of no microscopic size, each of the arms being between two and three inches long.

Thus, it is certain that these vast depths are not untenanted, and that the presumed impossibility of animals living without light and air at depths so enormous that the mere pressure of the water is equivalent to upwards of two tons on every square inch of surface, is another of those assumptions that we are all too ready to make, and another proof that what is quite contrary to our experience and utterly opposed to any analogies we can draw, may still exist and belong to the usual order of nature. Many of these little star-fishes having been brought home, they remain to be their own witnesses, and they differ so little in appearance from some common kinds, that an ordinary observer would pass them by, little aware of the fact of their having lived under circumstances, to us so utterly inconceivable.

A singular class of marine animals have recently attracted much attention, and are now to be met with in most drawing-rooms. Some of these, indeed (the Acalephæ, or sea-nettles), inhabit the open ocean, and, being of large size, are not imprisoned in our marine vivaria; but

others (true polyps) are among the chief ornaments of those interesting contrivances. The Medusæ, or jelly-fish, are sometimes two or three feet across, or even more, and when removed from the water, look like huge masses of nearly transparent mucus which, if left alone, soon evaporates, hardly leaving behind a few grains of solid matter. Others are far smaller and exquisitely beautiful; others again sting like nettles; and many of them are concerned in producing that marvellously beautiful phosphorescence of the sea, which occasionally ranges for vast distances. These animals serve to feed the whales as well as to light up the ocean, and in their young state they form exquisite little groups of individuals of the most fantastic shapes, formerly supposed to be polyps.

The sea anemones and polyps generally consist of a cylindrical cavity opening above in a wide mouth, round which are arranged numerous feelers which the animal extends in search of food. Some of them secrete no hard stony matter, but others form those constructions known in all seas to a greater or less extent, and recognised as corals. Their variety is endless, and the mass of solid matter thus accumulated almost beyond belief. Separated incessantly from sea-water, which reabsorbs it again as readily from every limestone rock with which it comes in contact, the mass of calcareous matter enclosed by these singular animals is constantly receiving additions, and, being little subject to change, remains from one generation to another accumulating into masses which form a sensible proportion of the earth's superficial crust. Since, however, the animals constructing the large masses of coral which form islands in the Pacific Ocean can only continue their labours within moderate limits of depth, it would follow that the mass of limestone is only a superficial plate, were it not that in many cases the districts thus built upon are, for some reason, constantly descending below the level of the sea, while some other tracts of land and sea-bottom are known to rise and swell slowly upwards. The descending land, when occupied by the coral animal, is constantly supplied with additions near the surface, and thus forms a vast perpendicular wall to the depth of hundreds of fathoms.

The beautiful red coral of the Mediterranean, fished up from moderate depths every year, is not of this kind. Like the other branching varieties, it does not form compact masses.

There yet remains one, and that not an unimportant group of animals, that may fitly take rank as contributing to the wonders of the sea—the constructors of minute, many-chambered shells. Such animals are mere lumps of jelly, capable of extending themselves in all directions, and capable also of forming shelly coverings singularly elegant and complicated, but so small that their shape can only be recognised under a powerful microscope. Multitudes of individuals, however, combine to produce even a single shell, and thus the individual

animals are almost infinitesimal. Will it be believed that such animals are spread over thousands of square miles of ocean, that they occur both at the surface and at depths the most considerable that have yet been reached, and that their remains compose ninety per cent. of the mud that forms the sea-bottom at those depths? The stomachs of the brittle-stars brought up in mid-Atlantic in a living state through nearly two miles of water, were found to contain half-digested food of this kind; and although it may never be possible to obtain the creatures themselves alive from such depths, the fact of their living there is now clearly proved. That they have long inhabited those cold silent recesses, is also evident, since the whole bottom of the Atlantic seems strewed thickly with a fine mud entirely made up of their remains, associated only with a few transported stones and a rare sprinkling of sponge spicules and flinty cases of the simplest vegetable cells.

It remains only to treat of these sponges and of the vegetation belonging to the sea. The sponges are very widely spread, and each consists of a curious network clothed with soft gelatinous matter. At frequent intervals are open spaces through which water is made to pass, and in this way food is brought. It is not a little curious to watch these lowest forms of life, in the water, where their brilliant colours are as remarkable as the shapelessness of the masses they present. Such opportunities are now not rare, as the animals can be kept in vivaria prepared for the drawing-room.

Not so easily can the wealth of marine vegetation be observed. From the crimson spots on the otherwise unsullied snow of the Arctic seas to the vast serpent-like seaweeds eight hundred feet long floating in the open ocean, there is a never-ending variety of plants abounding with points of interest, appealing to the eye for admiration and wonder, but requiring the skill and experience of the accomplished naturalist to explain and understand. Some of the most important of these seaweeds float permanently on the surface of the water, growing there and limited to certain latitudes quite as completely as the marine animals; but others are from time to time detached from the rocks to which they are usually attached, and drift away to new and distant lands. With them, proceed whole colonies of fishes, crustaceans, molluscs, annelids, and other animals, which are thus often conveyed in the most unexpected manner from one point to another. So extensive are the floating masses, that the small ships that first crossed the Atlantic to America were seriously impeded by them, and even now they sometimes interfere with the paddle-wheel or the screw of the ocean steamer. It is chiefly in the vortex, or central part of the great Gulf stream, that these accumulations take place, and there they seem to be permanent.

Elsewhere the vegetation of the sea is chiefly seen near land, and is there as remarkable for variety and beauty as the "flora" of the adjacent land itself.

While these larger and more highly organised vegetable forms are widely spread and easily recognised, there is not unfrequently to be recognised a dull filmy appearance—or brown stain—on the water, which being examined is found to consist of inconceivably small groups of cells which multiply with a marvellous rapidity, and of which each one obtains from sea water minute particles of flint, which are deposited in plates covered with lines and marked with the most elegant patterns. While the cells themselves, being simple vegetable productions, decay almost as rapidly as they form, the atoms of flint within which each is enclosed, are permanent, and sink down in time to the bottom of the sea. To such an extent do these multiply, that in the South Pacific Ocean there is one heap which covers a space four hundred miles long and one hundred and twenty miles broad: the thickness being great and rapidly increasing. Elsewhere similar rapid accumulations are being made by means apparently not less inadequate.

FOREST VOICES.

I HEARD a murmuring song
Breathed o'er my spirit as the day grew dim,
I heard the forest voices wild and strong
Chant forth their autumn hymn.

I heard it when at night
All nature else was wrapt in solemn calm,
And then my heart-chords quivered, as they sing'd
Beneath a funeral psalm.

The summer months are past,
With all their fragrance, and their flowery sheen,
Their gorgeous colours—all too fair to last,—
And our bright robe of green.

Beneath our pleasant shade
What crowds of happy forms roamed light and gay,
But now the leaves, which then cool shadows mad,
Have passed like them away.

The autumn came, and spread
A gold and purple covering o'er our leaves,
Rich as those evening beams that, softly shall,
The western sky receives.

The stormy changeful breath
Of autumn winds rashed past with hollow sweep,
And all those tender leaves in hurried death
'Neath our bare branches sleep.

And now, so sad and lone,
When the red sun sinks down the glowing west,
Through the cold night for those dead leaves we weep,
And sob ourselves to rest.

Alas! no sheltering roof
Receives them; like the sheaves of yellow grain,
The wind that often whisks them high aloft
Brings them to earth again.

All mingled, there they lie,
Those heaps of skeleton-like leaves, below;
But winter has prepared for all that die
A shroud and tomb of snow.

Thus thrilled the mournful strain
With varying cadence, till the stars grew dim,
And the grey dawn released my soul again
From that sad-sighing hymn.

THE GREY WOMAN.

IN THREE PORTIONS. PORTION THE FIRST.

THERE is a mill by the Neckar-side, to which many people resort for coffee, according to the fashion which is almost national in Germany. There is nothing particularly attractive in the situation of this mill; it is on the Mannheim (the flat and unromantic) side of Heidelberg. The river turns the mill-wheel with a plenteous gushing sound; the out-buildings and the dwelling-house of the miller form a well-kept dusty quadrangle. Again, further from the river, there is a garden full of willows, and arbours, and flower-beds, not well kept, but very profuse in flowers and luxuriant creepers, knotting and looping the arbours together. In each of these arbours is a stationary table of white painted wood, and light movable chairs of the same colour and material.

I went to drink coffee there with some friends in 184—. The stately old miller came out to greet us, as some of the party were known to him of old. He was of a grand build of a man, and his loud musical voice, with its tone friendly and familiar, his rolling laugh of welcome, went well with the keen bright eye, the fine cloth of his coat, and the general look of substance about the place. Poultry of all kinds abounded in the mill-yard, where there were ample means of livelihood for them strewed on the ground; but not content with this, the miller took out handfuls of corn from the sacks, and threw liberally to the cocks and hens that ran almost under his feet in their eagerness. And all the time he was doing this, as it were habitually, he was talking to us, and ever and anon calling to his daughter and the serving-maids, to bid them hasten the coffee we had ordered. He followed us to an arbour, and saw us served to his satisfaction with the best of everything we could ask for; and then left us to go round to the different arbours and see that each party was properly attended to; and, as he went, this great, prosperous, happy-looking man whistled softly one of the most plaintive airs I ever heard.

"His family have held this mill ever since the old Palatinate days; or rather, I should say, have possessed the ground ever since then, for two successive mills of theirs have been burnt down by the French. If you want to see Scherer in a passion, just talk to him of the possibility of a French invasion."

But at this moment, still whistling that mournful air, we saw the miller going down the steps that led from the somewhat raised garden into the mill-yard; and so I seemed to have lost my chance of putting him in a passion.

We had nearly finished our coffee, and our "kuchen," and our cinnamon cake, when heavy splashes fell on our thick leafy covering; quicker and quicker they came, coming through

the tender leaves as if they were tearing them asunder; all the people in the garden were hurrying under shelter, or seeking for their carriages standing outside. Up the steps the miller came hastening, with a crimson umbrella, fit to cover every one left in the garden, and followed by his daughter, and one or two maidens, each bearing an umbrella.

"Come into the house—come in, I say. It is a summer-storm, and will flood the place for an hour or two, till the river carries it away. Here, here."

And we followed him back into his own house. We went into the kitchen first. Such an array of bright copper and tin vessels I never saw; and all the wooden things were as thoroughly scoured. The red tile floor was spotless when we went in, but in two minutes it was all over slop and dirt with the tread of many feet; for the kitchen was filled, and still the worthy miller kept bringing in more people under his great crimson umbrella. He even called the dogs in, and made them lie down under the tables.

His daughter said something to him in German, and he shook his head merrily at her. Everybody laughed.

"What did she say?" I asked.

"She told him to bring the ducks in next; but indeed if more people come we shall be suffocated. What with the thundery weather, and the stove, and all these steaming clothes, I really think we must ask leave to pass on. Perhaps we might go in and see Frau Scherer."

My friend asked the daughter of the house for permission to go into an inner chamber and see her mother. It was granted, and we went into a sort of salon, overlooking the Neckar; very small, very bright, and very close. The floor was slippery with polish; long narrow pieces of looking-glass against the walls reflected the perpetual motion of the river opposite; a white porcelain stove, with some old-fashioned ornaments of brass about it; a sofa, covered with Utrecht velvet, a table before it, and a piece of worsted-worked carpet under it; a vase of artificial flowers; and, lastly, an alcove with a bed in it, on which lay the paralysed wife of the good miller, knitting busily, formed the furniture. I spoke as if this was all that was to be seen in the room; but, sitting quietly, while my friend kept up a brisk conversation in a language which I but half understood, my eye was caught by a picture in a dark corner of the room, and I got up to examine it more nearly.

It was that of a young girl of extreme beauty; evidently of middle rank. There was a sensitive refinement in her face, as if she almost shrank from the gaze which, of necessity, the painter must have fixed upon her. It was not over-well painted, but I felt that it must have been a good likeness, from this strong impress of peculiar character which I have tried to describe. From the dress, I should guess it to have been painted in the latter half of the last century. And I afterwards heard that I was right.

There was a little pause in the conversation.

"Will you ask Frau Scherer who this is?"

My friend repeated my question, and received a long reply in German. Then she turned round and translated it to me.

"It is the likeness of a great-aunt of her husband's." (My friend was standing by me, and looking at the picture with sympathetic curiosity.) "See! here is the name on the open page of this Bible, 'Anna Scherer, 1778.' Frau Scherer says there is a tradition in the family that this pretty girl, with her complexion of lilies and roses, lost her colour soentirely through fright, that she was known by the name of the Grey Woman. She speaks as if this Anna Scherer lived in some state of life-long terror. But she does not know details; refers me to her husband for them. She thinks he has some papers which were written by the original of that picture for her daughter, who died in this very house not long after our friend there was married. We can ask Herr Scherer for the whole story if you like."

"Oh yes, pray do!" said I. And, as our host came in at this moment to ask how we were faring, and to tell us that he had sent to Heidelberg for carriages to convey us home, seeing no chance of the heavy rain abating, my friend, after thanking him, passed on to my request.

"Ah!" said he, his face changing, "the aunt Anna had a sad history. It was all owing to one of those hellish Frenchmen; and her daughter suffered for it—the cousin Ursula, as we all called her when I was a child. To be sure the good cousin Ursula was his child as well. The sins of the fathers are visited on their children. The lady would like to know all about it, would she? Well, there are papers—a kind of apology the aunt Anna wrote for putting an end to her daughter's engagement—or rather facts which she revealed, that prevented cousin Ursula from marrying the man she loved; and so she would never have any other good fellow, else I have heard say my father would have been thankful to have made her his wife." All this time he was rummaging in the drawer of an old-fashioned bureau, and now he turned round, with a bundle of yellow MSS. in his hand, which he gave to my friend, saying, "Take it home, take it home, and if you care to make out our crabbed German writing, you may keep it as long as you like, and read it at your leisure. Only I must have it back again when you have done with it, that's all."

And so we became possessed of the manuscript of the following letter, which it was our employment, during many a long evening that ensuing winter, to translate, and in some parts to abbreviate. The letter began with some reference to the pain which she had already inflicted upon her daughter by some unexplained opposition to a project of marriage; but I doubt if, without the clue with which the good miller had furnished us, we could have made out even this much from the passionate, broken sentences that made us fancy that some scene between the mother and daughter—and possibly a third

person—had occurred just before the mother had begun to write.

"Thou dost not love thy child, mother! Thou dost not care if her heart is broken!" Ah, God! and these words of my heart-beloved Ursula ring in my ears as if the sound of them would fill them when I lie a-dying. And her poor tear-stained face comes between me and everything else. Child! hearts do not break; life is very tough as well as very terrible. But I will not decide for thee. I will tell thee all; and thou shalt bear the burden of choice. I may be wrong; I have little wit left, and never had much, I think; but an instinct serves me in place of judgment, and that instinct tells me that thou and thy Henri must never be married. Yet I may be in error. I would fain make my child happy. Lay this paper before the good priest Schriesheim; if, after reading it, thou hast doubts which make thee uncertain. Only I will tell thee all now, on condition that no spoken word ever passes between us on the subject. It would kill me to be questioned. I should have to see all present again.

My father held, as thou knowest, the mill on the Neckar, where thy new-found uncle, Scherer, now lives. Thou rememberest the surprise with which we were received there last vintage twelve-month. How thy uncle disbelieved me when I said that I was his sister Anna, whom he had long believed to be dead, and how I had to lead thee underneath the picture, painted of me long ago, and point out, feature by feature, the likeness between it and thee, and how, as I spoke, I recalled first to my own mind, and then by speech to his, the details of the time when it was painted; the merry words that passed between us then, a happy boy and girl; the position of the articles of furniture in the room; our father's habits; the cherry-tree, now cut down, that shaded the window of my bedroom, through which my brother was wont to squeeze himself, in order to spring on to the topmost bough that would bear his weight; and thence would pass me back his cap laden with fruit to where I sat on the window-sill, too sick with fright for him to care much for eating the cherries.

And at length Frits gave way, and believed me to be his sister Anna, even as though I were risen from the dead. And thou rememberest how he fetched in his wife, and told her that I was not dead, but was come back to the old home once more, changed as I was. And she would scarce believe him, and scanned me with a cold, distrustful eye, till at length—for I knew her of old as Babette Müller—I said that I was well-to-do, and needed not to seek out friends for what they had to give. And then she asked—not me, but her husband—why I had kept silent so long, leading all—father, brother, every one that loved me in my own dear home—to esteem me dead. And then thine uncle (thou rememberest?) said he cared not to know more than I cared to tell; that I was his Anna, found again, to be a blessing to him in his old age, as

I had been in his boyhood. I thanked him in my heart for his trust; for were the need for telling all less than it seems to me now I could not speak of my past life. But she, who was my sister-in-law still, held back her welcome, and, for want of that, I did not go to live in Heidelberg as I had planned beforehand, in order to be near my brother Fritz, but contented myself with his promise to be a father to my Ursula when I should die and leave this weary world.

That Babette Müller was, as I may say, the cause of all my life's suffering. She was a baker's daughter in Heidelberg—a great beauty, as people said, and, indeed, as I could see for myself. I, too—thou sawest my picture—was reckoned a beauty, and I believe I was so. Babette Müller looked upon me as a rival. She liked to be admired, and had no one much to love her. I had several people to love me—thy grandfather Fritz, the old servant Kätschen, Karl, the head apprentice at the mill—and I feared admiration and notice, and the being stared at as the "Schöne Müllerin," whenever I went to make my purchases in Heidelberg.

Those were happy, peaceful days. I had Kätschen to help me in the housework, and whatever we did pleased my brave old father, who was always gentle and indulgent towards us women, though he was stern enough with the apprentices in the mill. Karl, the eldest of these, was his favourite; and I can see now that my father wished him to marry me, and that Karl himself was desirous to do so. But Karl was rough-spoken, and passionate—not with me, but with the others—and I shrank from him in a way which, I fear, gave him pain. And then came thy uncle Fritz's marriage; and Babette was brought to the mill to be its mistress. Not that I cared much for giving up my post, for, in spite of my father's great kindness, I always feared that I did not manage well for so large a family (with the men, and a girl under Kätschen, we sat down eleven each night to supper). But when Babette began to find fault with Kätschen, I was unhappy at the blame that fell on faithful servants; and by-and-by I began to see that Babette was egging on Karl to make more open love to me, and, as she once said, to get done with it, and take me off to a home of my own. My father was growing old, and did not perceive all my daily discomfort. The more Karl advanced, the more I disliked him. He was good in the main, but I had no notion of being married, and could not bear any one who talked to me about it.

Things were in this way when I had an invitation to go to Carlsruhe to visit a schoolfellow, of whom I had been very fond. Babette was all for my going; I don't think I wanted to leave home, and yet I had been very fond of Sophie Rupprecht. But I was always shy among strangers. Somehow the affair was settled for me, but not until both Fritz and my father had made inquiries as to the character and position of the Rupprechts. They learned that the father had held some kind of inferior position about the Grand-Duke's court, and was now dead,

leaving a widow, a noble lady, and two daughters, the elder of whom was Sophie, my friend. Madame Rupprecht was not rich, but more than respectable—genteeel. When this was ascertained, my father made no opposition to my going; Babette forwarded it by all the means in her power, and even my dear Fritz had his word to say in its favour. Only Kätschen was against it—Kätschen and Karl. The opposition of Karl did more to send me to Carlsruhe than anything. For I could have objected to go; but when he took upon himself to ask what was the good of going a-gadding, visiting strangers of whom no one knew anything, I yielded to circumstances—to the pulling of Sophie and the pushing of Babette. I was silently vexed, I remember, at Babette's inspection of my clothes; at the way in which she settled that this gown was too old-fashioned, or that too common, to go with me on my visit to a noble lady; and at the way in which she took upon herself to spend the money my father had given me to buy what was requisite for the occasion. And yet I blamed myself, for every one else thought her so kind for doing all this; and she herself meant kindly, too.

At last I quitted the mill by the Neckar-side. It was a long day's journey, and Fritz went with me to Carlsruhe. The Rupprechts lived on the third floor of a house a little behind one of the principal streets, in a cramped-up court, to which we gained admittance through a doorway in the street. I remember how pinched their rooms looked after the large space we had at the mill, and yet they had an air of grandeur about them which was new to me, and which gave me pleasure, faded as some of it was. Madame Rupprecht was too formal a lady for me; I was never at my ease with her; but Sophie was all that I had recollected her at school: kind, affectionate, and only rather too ready with her expressions of admiration and regard. The little sister kept out of our way; and that was all we needed, in the first enthusiastic renewal of our early friendship. The one great object of Madame Rupprecht's life was to retain her position in society; and as her means were much diminished since her husband's death, there was not much comfort, though there was a great deal of show, in their way of living; just the opposite of what it was at my father's house. I believe that my coming was not too much desired by Madame Rupprecht, as I brought with me another mouth to be fed; but Sophie had spent a year or more in entreating for permission to invite me, and her mother, having once consented, was too well bred not to give me a stately welcome.

The life in Carlsruhe was very different from what it was at home. The hours were later, the coffee was weaker in the morning, the porridge was weaker, the boiled beef less relieved by other diet, the dresses finer, the evening engagements constant. I did not find these visits pleasant. We might not knit, which would have relieved the tedium a little; but we sat in a circle, talking together, only interrupted

occasionally by a gentleman, who, breaking out of the knot of men who stood near the door talking eagerly together, stole across the room on tiptoe, his hat under his arm, and, bringing his feet together in the position we called the first at the dancing-school, made a low bow to the lady he was going to address. The first time I saw these manners I could not help smiling; but Madame Rupprecht saw me, and spoke to me next morning rather severely, telling me that, of course, in my country breeding I could have seen nothing of court manners, or French fashions, but that that was no reason for my laughing at them. Of course I tried never to smile again in company. This visit to Carlsruhe took place in '89, just when every one was full of the events taking place at Paris; and yet at Carlsruhe French fashions were more talked of than French polities. Madame Rupprecht, especially, thought a great deal of all French people. And this again was quite different to us at home. Fritz could hardly bear the name of a Frenchman; and it had nearly been an obstacle to my visit to Sophie that her mother preferred being called Madame to her proper title of Frau.

One night I was sitting next to Sophie, and longing for the time when we might have supper and go home, so as to be able to speak together, a thing forbidden by Madame Rupprecht's rules of etiquette, which strictly prohibited any but the most necessary conversation passing between members of the same family when in society. I was sitting, I say, scarcely keeping back my inclination to yawn, when two gentlemen came in, one of whom was evidently a stranger to the whole party, from the formal manner in which the host led him up, and presented him to the hostess. I thought I had never seen any one so handsome or so elegant. His hair was powdered, of course, but one could see from his complexion that it was fair in its natural state. His features were as delicate as a girl's, and set off by two little "mouches," as we called patches in those days, one at the left corner of his mouth, the other prolonging, as it were, the right eye. His dress was blue and silver. I was so lost in admiration of this beautiful young man, that I was as much surprised as if the angel Gabriel had spoken to me, when the lady of the house brought him forward to present him to me. She called him Monsieur de la Tourelle, and he began to speak to me in French; but though I understood him perfectly, I dared not trust myself to reply to him in that language. Then he tried German, speaking it with a kind of soft lisp that I thought charming. But, before the end of the evening, I became a little tired of the affected softness and effeminacy of his manners, and the exaggerated compliments he paid me, which had the effect of making all the company turn round and look at me. Madame Rupprecht was, however, pleased with the precise thing that displeased me. She liked either Sophie or me to create a sensation; of course she would have preferred that it should have been her daughter, but her daughter's friend was next

best. As we went away I heard Madame Rupprecht and Monsieur de la Tourelle reciprocating civil speeches with might and main, from which I found out that the French gentleman was coming to call on us the next day. I do not know whether I was more glad or frightened, for I had been kept upon stilts of good manners all the evening. But still I was flattered when Madame Rupprecht spoke as if she had invited him, because he had shown pleasure in my society, and even more gratified by Sophie's ungrudging delight at the evident interest I had excited in so fine and agreeable a gentleman. Yet, with all this, they had hard work to keep me from running out of the salon the next day, when we heard his voice inquiring at the gate on the stairs for Madame Rupprecht. They had made me put on my Sunday gown, and they themselves were dressed as for a reception.

When he was gone away, Madame Rupprecht congratulated me on the conquest I had made; for, indeed, he had scarcely spoken to any one else, beyond what mere civility required, and had almost invited himself to come in the evening to bring some new song, which was all the fashion in Paris, he said. Madame Rupprecht had been out all morning, as she told me, to glean information about Monsieur de la Tourelle. He was a *propriétaire*, had a small château on the Vosges mountains; he owned land there, but had a large income from some sources quite independent of this property. Altogether, he was a good match, as she emphatically observed. She never seemed to think that I could refuse him after this account of his wealth, nor do I believe she would have allowed Sophie a choice, even had he been as old and ugly as he was young and handsome. I do not quite know—so many events have come to pass since then, and blurred the clearness of my recollections—if I loved him or not. He was very much devoted to me; he almost frightened me by the excess of his demonstrations of love. And he was very charming to everybody around me, who all spoke of him as the most fascinating of men, and of me as the most fortunate of girls. And yet I never felt quite at my ease with him. I was always relieved when his visits were over, although I missed his presence when he did not come. He prolonged his visit to the friend with whom he was staying at Carlsruhe, on purpose to woo me. He loaded me with presents, which I was unwilling to take, only Madame Rupprecht seemed to consider me an affected prude if I refused them. Many of these presents consisted of articles of valuable old jewellery, evidently belonging to his family; by accepting these I doubled the ties which were formed around me by circumstances even more than by my own consent. In those days we did not write letters to absent friends as frequently as is done now, and I had been unwilling to name him in the few letters that I wrote home. At length, however, I learned from Madame Rupprecht that she had written to my father to announce the splendid conquest I had made, and to request his presence at my betrothal. I

started with astonishment. I had not realised that affairs had gone so far as this. But when she asked me, in a stern, offended manner, what I had meant by my conduct if I did not intend to marry Monsieur de la Tourelle—I had received his visits, his presents, all his various advances without showing any unwillingness or repugnance—and it was all true; I had shown no repugnance, though I did not wish to be married to him,—at least, not so soon)—what could I do but hang my head, and silently consent to the rapid enunciation of the only course which now remained for me if I would not be esteemed a heartless coquette all the rest of my days?

There was some difficulty, which I afterwards learnt that my sister-in-law had obviated, about my betrothal taking place from home. My father, and Fritz especially, were for having me return to the mill, and there be betrothed, and from thence be married. But the Rupprechts and Monsieur de la Tourelle were equally urgent on the other side; and Babette was unwilling to have the trouble of the commotion at the mill; and also, I think, a little disliked the idea of the contrast of my grander marriage with her own.

So my father and Fritz came over to the betrothal. They were to stay at an inn in Carlsruhe for a fortnight, at the end of which time the marriage was to take place. Monsieur de la Tourelle told me he had business at home, which would oblige him to be absent during the interval between the two events; and I was very glad of it, for I did not think that he valued my father and my brother as I could have wished him to do. He was very polite to them; put on all the soft, grand manner, which he had rather dropped with me; and complimented us all round, beginning with my father and Madame Rupprecht, and ending with little Alwina. But he a little scoffed at the old-fashioned church ceremonies which my father insisted on; and I fancy Fritz must have taken some of his compliments as satire, for I saw certain signs of manner by which I knew that my future husband, for all his civil words, had irritated and annoyed my brother. But all the money arrangements were liberal in the extreme, and more than satisfied, almost surprised, my father. Even Fritz lifted up his eyebrows and whistled. I alone did not care about anything. I was bewitched,—in a dream,—a kind of despair. I had got into a net through my own timidity and weakness, and I did not see how to get out of it. I clung to my own home-people that fortnight as I had never done before. Their voices, their ways were all so pleasant and familiar to me, after the constraint in which I had been living. I might speak and do as I liked without being corrected by Madame Rupprecht, or reprobated in a delicate, complimentary way by Monsieur de la Tourelle. One day I said to my father that I did not want to be married, that I would rather go back to the dear old mill; but he seemed to feel this speech of mine as a dereliction of duty as great as if I had committed perjury; as if, after the ceremony of betrothal, no one had any right over me but my future

husband. And yet he asked me some solemn questions; but my answers were not such as to do me any good.

“Dost thou know any fault or crime in this man that should prevent God’s blessing from resting on thy marriage with him? Dost thou feel aversion or repugnance to him in any way?”

And to all this, what could I say? I could only stammer out that I did not think I loved him enough; and my poor old father saw in this reluctance only the fancy of a silly girl who did not know her own mind, but who had now gone too far to recede.

So we were married, in the Court chapel, a privilege which Madame Rupprecht had used no end of efforts to obtain for us, and which she must have thought was to secure us all possible happiness, both at the time and in recollection afterwards.

We were married; and after two days spent in festivity at Carlsruhe, among all our new fashionable friends there, I bade good-by for ever to my dear old father. I had begged my husband to take me by way of Heidelberg to his old castle in the Vosges; but I found an amount of determination, under that effeminate appearance and manner, for which I was not prepared, and he refused my first request so decidedly that I dared not urge it. “Henceforth, Anna,” said he, “you will move in a different sphere of life; and though it is possible that you may have the power of showing favour to your relations from time to time, yet much or familiar intercourse will be undesirable, and is what I cannot allow.” I felt almost afraid, after this formal speech, of asking my father and Fritz to come and see me; but, when the agony of bidding them farewell overcame all my prudence, I did beg them to pay me a visit ere long. But they shook their heads, and spoke of business at home, of different kinds of life, of my being a Frenchwoman now. Only my father broke out at last with a blessing, and said, “If my child is unhappy—which God forbid—let her remember that her father’s house is ever open to her.” I was on the point of crying out, “Oh! take me back then now, my father!—oh, my father!” when I felt, rather than saw, my husband present near me. He looked on with a slightly contemptuous air, and taking my hand in his, he led me weeping away, saying that short farewells were always the best when they were inevitable.

It took us two days to reach his château in the Vosges, for the roads were bad and the way difficult to ascertain. Nothing could be more devoted than he was all the time of the journey. It seemed as if he were trying in every way to make up for the separation which every hour made me feel the more complete between my present and my former life. I seemed as if I were only now wakening up to a full sense of what marriage was, and I dare say I was not a cheerful companion on the tedious journey. At length jealousy of my regret for my father and brother got the better of M. de la Tourelle, and he became so much displeased with me that I

thought my heart would break with the sense of desolation. So it was in no cheerful frame of mind that we approached *Les Rochers*, and I thought that perhaps it was because I was so unhappy that the place looked so dreary. On one side, the château looked like a raw new building, hastily run up for some immediate purpose, without any growth of trees or underwood near it, only the remains of the stone used for building, not yet cleared away from the immediate neighbourhood, although weeds and lichens had been suffered to grow near and over the heaps of rubbish; on the other, were the great rocks from which the place took its name, and rising close against them, as if almost a natural formation, was the old castle, whose building dated many centuries back.

It was not large nor grand, but it was strong and picturesque, and I used to wish that we lived in it rather than in the smart half-furnished apartment in the new edifice, which had been hastily got ready for my reception. Incongruous as the two parts were, they were joined into a whole by means of intricate passages and unexpected doors, the exact positions of which I never fully understood. M. de la Tourelle led me to a suite of rooms set apart for me, and formally installed me in them, as in a domain of which I was sovereign. He apologised for the hasty preparation which was all he had been able to make for me, but promised, before I asked, or even thought of complaining, that they should be made as luxurious as heart could wish before many weeks had elapsed. But when, in the gloom of an autumnal evening, I caught my own face and figure reflected in all the mirrors, which showed only a mysterious background in the dim light of the many candles which failed to illuminate the great proportions of the half-furnished salon, I clung to M. de la Tourelle, and begged to be taken to the rooms he had occupied before his marriage, he seemed angry with me, although he affected to laugh, and so decidedly put aside the notion of my having any other rooms but these, that I trembled in silence at the fantastic figures and shapes which my imagination called up as peopling the background of those gloomy mirrors. There was my boudoir, a little less dreary—my bedroom, with its grand and tarnished furniture, which I commonly made into my sitting-room, locking up the various doors which led into the boudoir, the salon, the passage—all but one, through which M. de la Tourelle always entered from his own apartments in the older part of the castle. But this preference of mine for occupying my bedroom annoyed M. de la Tourelle, I am sure, though he did not care to express his displeasure. He would always allure me back into the salon, which I disliked more and more from its complete separation from the rest of the building by the long passage into which all the doors of my apartment opened. This passage was closed by heavy doors and portières, through which I could not hear a sound from the other parts of the house, and, of course, the servants could not

hear any movement or cry of mine unless expressly summoned. To a girl brought up as I had been in a household where every individual lived all day in the sight of every other member of the family, never wanted either cheerful words or the sense of silent companionship, this grand isolation of mine was very formidable; and the more so, because M. de la Tourelle, as landed proprietor, sportsman, and what not, was generally out of doors the greater part of every day, and sometimes for two or three days at a time. I had no pride to keep me from associating with the domestics; it would have been natural to me in many ways to have sought them out for a word of sympathy in those dreary days when I was left so entirely to myself, had they been like our kindly German servants. But I disliked them, one and all; I could not tell why. Some were civil, but there was a familiarity in their civility which repelled me; others were rude, and treated me more as if I were an intruder than their master's chosen wife; and yet of the two sets I liked these last the best.

The principal male servant belonged to this latter class. I was very much afraid of him, he had such an air of suspicious surliness about him in all he did for me; and yet M. de la Tourelle spoke of him as most valuable and faithful. Indeed, it sometimes struck me that Lefebvre ruled his master in some things; and this I could not make out. For, while M. de la Tourelle behaved towards me as if I were some precious toy or idol, to be cherished, and fostered, and petted, and indulged, I soon found out how little I, or, apparently, any one else, could bend the terrible will of the man who had on first acquaintance appeared to me too effeminate and languid to exert his will in the slightest particular. I had learnt to know his face better now; and to see that some vehement depth of feeling, the cause of which I could not fathom, made his grey eye glitter with pale light, and his lips contract, and his delicate cheek whiten on certain occasions. But all had been so open and above board at home, that I had no experience to help me to unravel any mysteries among those who lived under the same roof. I understood that I had made what Madame Rupprecht and her set would have called a great marriage, because I lived in a château with many servants, bound ostensibly to obey me as a mistress. I understood that M. de la Tourelle was fond enough of me in his way—proud of my beauty, I dare say (for he often enough spoke about it to me)—but he was also jealous, and suspicious, and uninfluenced by my wishes, unless they tallied with his own. I felt at this time as if I could have been fond of him too, if he would have let me: but I was timid from my childhood, and before long my dread of his displeasure (coming down like thunder into the midst of his love, for such slight causes as hesitation in reply, a wrong word, or a sigh for my father), conquered my humorous inclination to love one who was so handsome, so accomplished, so in-

dulgent and devoted. But if I could not please him when indeed I loved him, you may imagine how often I did wrong when I was so much afraid of him as to quietly avoid his company for fear of his outbursts of passion. One thing I remember noticing, that the more M. de la Tourelle was displeased with me, the more Lefebvre seemed to chuckle; and when I was restored to favour, sometimes on as sudden an impulse as that which occasioned my disgrace, Lefebvre would look askance at me with his cold, malicious eyes, and once or twice at such times he spoke most disrespectfully to M. de la Tourelle.

I have almost forgotten to say that, in the early days of my life at Les Rochers, M. de la Tourelle, in contemptuous indulgent pity at my weakness in disliking the dreary grandeur of the salon, wrote up to the milliner in Paris from whom my corbeille de mariage had come, to desire her to look out for me a maid of middle age, experienced in the toilette, and with so much refinement that she might on occasion serve as companion to me.

MR. HULLAH'S CLASSES.

A LADDER with the Latin motto "Per scalam ascendimus," mounting by the scale (or ladder), stood over the fireplaces of St. Martin's Hall, lately destroyed by fire. The master of that hall was Mr. John Hullah, the most effectual musical reformer whose good influence has been felt by the people of England in our day, or in any day before it. His energetic hand has held the ladder by which other men have mounted; but it has been to him no ladder of fortune. Even before he was burnt out by fire the other day, he was burnt out by zeal.

In a Kentish village numbering hardly more than five hundred inhabitants, thanks to Mr. Hullah's scales, the children, the young men and women, even several of the old men who work on farms, have become singers. This Christmas, and every Christmas and Easter for some years past, they have performed an oratorio of Handel or some other great master; they cherish their church music, and they live together with their minds awakened to such sense of harmony, that for years past not one of them has been punished for, or accused of, offence against the law. The vicar and his parish are as one family together. At one of their mid-winter oratorios a young woman did not come in till after the music had begun. Her house had been snowed up, but her father, a farmer, had been getting his labourers together, and they had all cleared a way for her, that she might go and take her part in the sublime strain.

At the bottom of all this, what do we find but Mr. Hullah's music books? Some of them found their way by chance to Pitcairn's Island, where men have learnt from them to make the desert blossom with their songs. Year after year Mr. Hullah has taught classes upon classes. His disciples have taught in the provinces with steady zeal, of which we shall best show the force and the effect by an example.

Twenty years ago, there was no popular taste in this country for anything but dance music, comic songs, and sentimental ballads of the weakest texture. Nobody then believed England to be what everybody now sees it is—a musical nation. English opera then was a tradition more than half suspected to be, like other traditions, fiction. Now, the two largest theatres in London vie with each other in producing it, and we have discovered that our nation begets, not only singers and good judges of song, but musicians and composers who in the new atmosphere of national appreciation will know how to hold up their heads in presence of the foreigner.

It seemed to Mr. Hullah in those bygone days that a diffused knowledge of the elements of music would be a great gain to his country. He was first struck by the deficiency, not in observation of the lower, but of the middle and upper classes. When polite folks came together they bored one another with bad solo singing, and concerted music was almost impossible, because there were few vocalists who could really read music at all.

About the end of eighteen thirty-nine, Mr. Hullah, having become acquainted with Dr. Mainzer's system in Paris, again went thither; for he had heard of M. Wilhem, and he found him carrying out his system of teaching on a very extensive scale, having direct government sanction and support so far as regarded his schools for the poor, whether children or adults.

Twenty years ago, Mr. Hullah proposed to the Committee of Council on Education, of which Dr. Kay was then secretary, to open singing-schools for schoolmasters on Wilhem's system in London; and these singing classes soon grew into classes for all kinds of persons; but their growth was impeded by want of a place of meeting, ample, convenient, and not too costly. Saint Martin's Hall, of which the first stone was laid by Lord Carlisle in June, 'forty-seven, was built; but, alas! Saint Martin's Hall, in the phrase of the money-getter, "did not pay." It is difficult to estimate the value of the work done in it for the elevation and refinement of the people. The effort to maintain it had drained all the resources of its founder, and its maintenance began to seem impossible when the recent fire brought the whole case to a final issue. Yet, during the past twenty years one hundred and ninety-five classes of adults, of both sexes, averaging seventy persons in each class, have been taught, by Mr. Hullah himself, and by a loyal body of assistants, of whom the foremost were Mr. May and Mr. Monk, and two other gentlemen presently to be mentioned by name. The sale of musical publications has been enormous, and among these, each set of large sheets represents a class somewhere—a single book often the study of a teacher; parents have learnt that they might teach their children. Brothers and sisters have taught one another. The men in the lighthouse on the North Foreland, having got hold of one of Mr. Hullah's manuals, worked through the exercises together, helping and correcting one another as they best might. Others

had used, and are now using, the book. That is a part only of what the sale of one copy represented.

Mr. Hullah's earnestness and skill were soon appreciated. At the outset of his career he was appointed professor of vocal music at King's College, where he still, as professor, teaches church singing to students of the theological department. In 'forty-four, a class of about fifty was formed for a daily lesson, on Mr. Hullah's system, at Trinity College, Cambridge. Its members were heads of colleges, tutors, and masters of arts. The ladies of the same families had their own class in the hour following. In four or five months these students sang glees, madrigals, part songs, anthems, and motets of rather more than ordinary difficulty. The lessons were resumed after the long vacation, and at the end of the year several private choral performances were given at Trinity Lodge. A class for the undergraduates had been at work also; and there were classes for townspeople of divers grades. Mr. Banister, who represented Mr. Hullah in this leavening of Cambridge with a sense of music, taught also in London a class of the wives, sisters, and daughters of mechanics, who, attending themselves, several hundred strong, to be taught by Mr. Hullah, begged that a class might be formed also for their women-folk. The result was a class of seventy, to which the women came half an hour before time to secure good places, anxiously counting their last lesson while they waited, and at which they made progress with a speed only to be accounted for by those who could picture the home evenings in which the husband and father joined with his own household in song, and when comparing the fruits of their lessons they all helped each other.

A more striking illustration of the diffused influence of Mr. Hullah's enthusiasm, is to be found in the result of the labours of Mr. Constantine among the mountains of Cumberland and amidst the whirr of the machinery of northern England, among a people famous in these days for their good choral singing. When, in 'forty-two, Mr. Constantine began working Mr. Hullah's system, under the direction of Mr. Crowe, at Liverpool, he taught first a mixed class of ladies and gentlemen in the National Schoolroom at Birkenhead, and gradually undertook the following round as his week's work. We begin it in the middle: Wednesday, the first business, was to get to Ulverston, twenty-two miles distant; the way being across the sands of Morecombe Bay. This journey, in winter time, had to be made often in the dark, because the low tide and the morning sun would not always keep in harmony together. The winter fogs, too, are, in Morecombe Bay, not very welcome to a lonely rider travelling on horseback, and obliged to rely on his horse's knowledge of the track. Class-day in quiet Ulverston was always a gala-day. The singing-master's horse was sure to be well looked after. For Ulverston, the town farthest north in Lancashire, stands on a tongue of land where there

was nothing to enliven its work, but the market day, till the musician came. The four thousand inhabitants yielded three singing classes. One contained about fifty ladies and gentlemen, another forty children, and the other was a general class of a hundred. The excellent organist kept up the work, and has conducted an Ulverston musical society from that time, we believe, to this. People came from miles away to be taught in these classes. A cart-load of poor children used to be sent by a kind lady from Bardsea. A hale old clergyman walked, in all weathers, nine miles into Ulverston and nine miles home again, to qualify himself for teaching, upon Mr. Hullah's system, his school-children and parishioners, that so he might elevate not only the music in his church, but also the happiness, and even the morals of his district. He was rewarded with a success beyond his expectations. On Thursday the lecturer went on to Ambleside, a ride of twenty-one miles, to a place that is, in winter, very quiet, with its five or six hundred inhabitants sorely in need of wholesome entertainment. Here, where there used to be the most horribly nasal and inharmonious imitation of church music, there is now sung by the people a plain musical service, irreproachable in taste. On Friday the round was from Ambleside, fourteen miles on, to Kendal, where there were four pretty good classes, but these did not live to a second course. Sixteen miles on, next day, Saturday, brought the teacher to Casterton schools. Having taught there, a ride of seventeen miles to Preston was followed by a railway journey to Lancaster and back, to meet classes there. Sunday was spent at Preston. A ten-mile-ride, on Monday, to Blackburn, carried the music-master to three classes, the last a very large one, chiefly composed of factory hands. On Tuesday the Lancaster classes were revisited, by way of Preston, and so the week's round ran for one of Mr. Hullah's propagandists, in the winter of the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-three. The elementary classes led to the forming of an advanced class, for the practice of Part Music in Preston, Lancaster, Ulverston, and Ambleside. The largest classes, however, were those at Penrith. The same teacher afterwards taught in other towns both in the North and West of England. At the present time sixty or seventy students leave every year the Home and Colonial Schools, and twice as many are in training. The national training schools—St. Mark's, Chelsea; Battersea College; Whitelands—each yield about fifty teachers every year, teachers who have had some musical training. At very many schools—indeed, in all parts of the country—the good work is going on. In Mr. Hullah's personal teaching the interest has been so strong, that some members of his first upper school, formed twenty years ago, have abided by the classes until their recent dispersion. One energetic pupil walked twelve miles to a railway station, thirty miles distant from London, on his class nights, and was punctual in attendance. The head of a private school at Tunbridge attended a course,

travelling to town for every lesson, and repeating what he had learnt to his own pupils after his return.

It has been found that the number of people who are supposed to have "no ears" is wonderfully small; that, while only a few may have true genius for music, all can learn its grammar, and by patience with attention learn to bear their part not disagreeably in madrigals and psalms. Thanks to these singing schools the national ear has improved, and the national taste has been raised. Witness the enormous multiplication of concerts in which the choral performers are amateurs; witness the vast increase in the demand for musical publications and in the sale of musical instruments, especially of pianofortes and harmoniums; witness the great improvement in church music, and the admission even of chants into dissenting chapels. Wherever there is a large town it is now possible to form a chorus at a minute's notice, and it will be a chorus of singers, who are most at home in the best music, and enjoy its performance for the music's sake, far more than anybody can enjoy the act of listening.

A charming illustration of the benefit conferred upon society by Mr. Hullah's labours, we find in the working of St. Mark's School, Windsor, reared, and in a great measure sustained, by the beneficent energy of an Eton master, the Rev. Stephen Hawtrey. This school, which admits boys so far above the lowest rank that they can pay sixpence a week for their schooling, is one of the best of its kind in the country. The basis of its discipline is a full acceptance of the relation of love and confidence between teacher and taught. To make the resemblance to a family life greater, masters and boys breakfast together at one board when they meet, each boy bringing his bread and butter and having cocoa given to him.

Mr. Hawtrey, preaching in the chapel at Dedworth, was annoyed by the bad psalmody. While considering what was to be done, he took up in the publisher's shop a copy of Mr. Hullah's Manual, then newly published under the direction of the Privy Council. He saw that it met his want, went to work at it himself together with his clerk, attended the first choral meeting of the classes in Exeter Hall, and then obtained leave to teach music from notes to those of the Windsor national schoolboys who showed a disposition to learn. In that way a little choir was formed that went to sing at Dedworth on a Sunday. There was an afternoon and evening service, and between the service singing boys and minister had tea together. The minister, being a wise, kindly, simple-hearted man, affectionate feelings were thus stirred. When difficulty about lessons at the national school made a separate place necessary if the music-school was to be continued, the boys themselves eagerly found a cottage, and the school then formed was not a school for music only. Taken by their kind patron on board a man-of-war, the St. Mark's boys by their manner and behaviour so pleased the warm-hearted captain, that he invited them to come and spend a week

on board "for the good of the ship." A picked band of them really went, therefore, on board the *Pembroke*, and were hospitably entertained by Captain Chaslewood. Among the entertainment they themselves afforded to the crew was a complete performance upon Christmas-eve of the *Messiah*; Mr. Hawtrey himself reverently explaining to the men before each part, the meaning of the music. The scene was so affecting, that the captain broke down in his thanks to Mr. Hawtrey, with "May God bless you, sir! May God bless you!" And afterwards, one of the common seamen, after long standing in thought beside his hammock before turning in, was heard to mutter, "Well, I say so, too, what the captain said, 'God bless him!'" But let us not forget, as the kind guide of those boys has not forgotten to record, that it was Mr. Hullah who had put the song into those children's mouths, whence it might sink into the hearts of sturdy men. And with what measure he weighed shall it not be now meted to him again? Is the last issue of his labour to be bankruptcy? Or, shall we help our helper, that he may again be helpful to us as of old?

A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NEXT morning, just as day was breaking, we set out on foot on our road to Constance. There was a pinkish-grey streak of light on the horizon, sure sign of a fine day, and the bright stars twinkled still in the clear half-sombre sky, and all was calm and noiseless—nothing to be heard but the tramp of our own feet on the hard causeway.

With the cowardly caution of one who feels the water with his foot before he springs in to swim, I was glad that I made my first experiences of companionship with these humble friends while it was yet dark and none could see us. The old leaven of snobbery was unsubdued in my heart, and, as I turned to look at poor old Vaterheim and then at the tinsel finery of Catinka, I bethought me of the little consideration the world extends to such as these and their belongings. "Vagabonds all!" would say some rich banker, as he rolled by in his massive travelling-carriage, creaking with imperials and jingling with bells; "Vagabonds all!" would mutter the Jew pedlar as he looked down from the banquette of the diligence. How slight is the sympathy of the realist for the poor creature whose life-labour is to please. How prone to regard him as useless, or, even worse, forgetting, the while, how a wiser than he has made many things in this beautiful world of ours that they should merely minister to enjoyment, gladden the eye and the ear, and make our pilgrimage less weary. Where would be the crimson jay? where the scarlet bustard? where the gorgeous peacock, with the nosegay on his tail? where the rose, and the honeysuckle, and the purple foxglove, mingling with the wild thorns in our hedgerows, if the universe were of *their* creation, and this great globe

but one big workshop? You never insist that the daisy and the daffodil should be pot-herbs; and why are there not to be wild flowers in humanity as in the fields? Is it not a great pride to you who live under a bell-glass, nurtured and cared for, and with your name attached to a cleft-stick at your side,—is it not a great pride to know that you are not like one of us poor dog-roses? Be satisfied, then, with that glory; we only ask to live! Shame on me for that "only!" As if there could be anything more delightful than life. Life, with all its capacities for love, and friendship, and heroism, and self-devotion, for generous actions and noble aspirations! Life to feel life, to know that we are in a sphere specially constructed for the exercise of our senses and the play of our faculties, free to choose the road we would take, and with a glorious reward if our choice be the right one!

"Vagabonds!" Yes," thought I, "there was once on a time such a vagabond, and he strolled along from village to village making of his flute a livelihood; a poor performer, too, he tells us he was, but he could touch the hearts of these simple villagers with his tones as he could move the hearts of thousands more learned than they with his marvellous pathos, and this vagabond was called Oliver Goldsmith." I have no words to say the ecstasy this thought gave me. Many a proud traveller doubtless swept past the poor wayfarer as he went, dusty and footsore, and who was, nevertheless, journeying onward to a great immortality; to be a name remembered with blessings by generations when the haughty man that scorned him was forgotten for ever. "And so now," thought I, "some splendid Russian or some Saxon Crœsus will crash by and not be conscious that the thin and weary-looking youth, with the girl's bundle on his stick and the red umbrella under his arm, that this is Potts! Ay, sir, you fancy that to be threadbare and footsore is to be vulgar-minded and ignoble, and you never so much as suspect that the heart inside that poor plaid waistcoat is throbbing with ambitions high as a Kaiser's, and that the brain within that battered Jim Crow is the realm of thoughts profound as Bacon's and high-soaring as Milton's."

If I make my reader a sharer in these musings of mine, it is because they occupied me for some miles of the way. Vaterchen was not talkative, and loved to smoke on uninteruptedly. I fancy that, in his way, he was as great a dreamer as myself. Catinka would have talked incessantly if any one had listened, or could understand her. As it was, she recited legends and sang songs for herself, as happy as ever a blackbird was to listen to his own melody; and though I paid no especial attention to her music, still did the sounds float through all my thoughts, bathing them with a soothing flood; just as the air we breathe is often loaded with a sweet and perfumed breath, that steals into our blood ere we know it. On the whole, we journeyed along very pleasantly, and what between the fresh morning air, the

brisk exercise, and the novelty of the situation, I felt in a train of spirits that made me delighted with everything. "This, after all," thought I, "is more like the original plan I sketched out for myself. This is the true mode to see life and the world. The student of Nature never begins his studies with the more complicated organisations; he sets out with what is simplest in structure, and least intricate in function; he begins with the extreme link of the chain: so, too, I start with the investigation of those whose lives of petty cares and small ambitions must render them easy of appreciation. This poor Mollusen Vaterchen, for instance—to see is to know him; and the girl, how absurd to connect such a guileless child of nature as that with those stereotyped notions of feminine craft and subtlety!" I then went on to imagine some future biographer of mine engaged on this portion of my life, puzzled for materials, puzzled, still more, to catch the clue to my meaning in it. "At this time," will he say, "Potts, by one of those strange caprices which often were the mainspring of his actions, resolved to lead a gipsy life. His ardent love of nature, his heartfelt enjoyment of scenery, and, more than even these, a certain breadth and generosity of character, disposed him to sympathise with those who have few to pity and fewer to succour them. With these wild children of the roadside he lived for months, joyfully sharing the burdens they carried, and taking his part in their privations. It was here he first met Catinka." I stopped at this sentence, and slowly repeated to myself, "It was here he first met Catinka!" What will he have next to record?" thought I. "Is Potts now to claim sympathy as the victim of a passion that regarded not station, nor class, nor fortune; that despised the cold conventionalities of a selfish world, and asked only a heart for a heart? Is he to be remembered as the faithful believer in his own theory—Love, above all? Are we to hear of him clasping rapturously to his bosom the poor forlorn girl?" So intensely were my feelings engaged in my speculations, that, at this critical pass, I threw my arms around Catinka's neck, and kissed her. A rebuke, not very cruel, not in the least angry or peevish, brought me quickly to myself, and as Vaterchen was fortunately in front and saw nothing of what passed, I speedily made my peace. I do not know how it happened, but in that same peace-making I had passed my arm round her waist and there it remained—an army of occupation after the treaty was signed—and we went along, side by side, very amicably—very happily.

We are often told that a small competence—the just enough to live on—is the bane of all enterprise; that men thus placed are removed from the stimulus of necessity, and yet not lifted into the higher atmosphere of ambitions. Exactly in the same way do I believe that equality is the grave of love. The passion thrives on difficulty, and requires sacrifice. You must bid defiance to mankind in your choice, or you are a mere fortune-hunter. Show the world

the blushing peasant girl you have made your wife, and say, "Yes, I have had courage to do this." Or else strive for a princess—a Russian princess. Better, far better, however, the humble-hearted child of nature and the fields, the simple, trusting, confiding girl, who regarding her lover as a sort of demi-god, would, while she clung to him—

"You press me so hard!" murmured Catinka, half rebukingly, but with a sort of pouting expression that became her marvellously.

"I was thinking of something that interested me, dearest," said I; but I'm not sure that I made my meaning very clear to her, and yet there was a roguish look in her black eye that puzzled me greatly. I began to like her, or, if you prefer the phrase, to fall in love with her. I knew it—I felt it just the way that a man who has once had theague never mistakes when he is going to have a return of the fever. In the same way, exactly did I recognise all the premonitory symptoms; the giddiness, the shivering, increased action of the heart—Halt, Potts! and reflect a bit; are you describing love, or a tertian?

How will the biographer conduct himself here? Whether will he have to say, "Potts resisted manfully this fatal attachment: had he yielded to the seductions of this early passion, it is more than probable we should never have seen him this, that, and t'other, nor would the world have been enriched with—Heaven knows what;" or shall he record, "Potts loved her, loved her as only such a nature as his ever loves? He felt keenly all that, in a mere worldly point of view, he must sacrifice; but it was exactly in that love and that sacrifice was born the poet, the wondrous child of song, who has given us the most glorious lyrics of our language. He had the manliness to share his fortune with this poor girl. 'It was,' he tells us himself, in one of those little touching passages in his diary, which place him immeasurably above the mock sentimentality of Jean-Jacques—it was on the road to Constance, of a bright and breezy summer morning, that I told her of my love. We were walking along, our arms around each other, as might two happy, guileless children. I was very young in what is called the world, but I had a boundless confidence in myself; my theory was, 'If I be strengthened by the deep devotion of one loving heart, I have no fears of failure.' Beautiful words, and worthy of all memory! And then he goes on: 'I drew her gently over to a grassy bench on the roadside, and taking my purse from my pocket, poured out before her its humble contents, in all something less than twenty sovereigns, but to her eyes a very Pactolus of wealth.'"

"What if I were to try this experiment?" thought I; "what if I were, so to say, to anticipate my own biography?" The notion pleased me much. There was something novel in it, too. It was making the experiment in the "corpore vile" of accident, to see what might come of it.

"Come here, Catinka," said I, pointing to a

moss-covered rock at the roadside, with a little well at its base—"come here, and let me have a drink of this nice clear water."

She assented with a smile and a nod, detaching at the same time a little cup from the flask which she wore at her side, in vivandière fashion. "And we'll fill my flask, too," said she, showing that it was empty. With a sort of childish glee she now knelt beside the stream, and washed the cup. What is it, I wonder, that gives the charm to running water, and imparts a sort of glad feeling to its contemplation? Is it that its ceaseless flow suggests that "for ever" which contrasts so powerfully with all short-lived pleasures? I cannot tell, but I was still musing over the difficulty, when, having twice offered me the cup without my noticing it, she at last raised it to my lips. And I drank—oh, what a draught it was! so clear, so cold, so pure; and all the time my eyes were resting on hers, looking, as it were, into another well, the deepest and most unfathomable of all.

"Sit down here beside me on this stone, Catinka, and help me to count these pieces of money; they have got so mingled together that I scarcely know what is left me." She seemed delighted with the project, and sat down at once, and I, throwing myself at her feet, poured the contents of my purse into her lap.

"Madonna mia!" was all she could utter, as she beheld the gold. Aladdin in the cave never felt a more overwhelming rapture than did she at sight of these immense riches. "But where did it come from?" cried she, wildly. "Have you got mines of gold and silver? Have you got gems, too—rubies and pearls? Oh, say if there be pearls; I love them so! And are you really a great prince, the son of a king; and are you wandering the world this way to seek adventures, or in search, mayhap, of that lovely princess you are in love with?" With wildest impetuosity she asked these and a hundred other questions, for it was only now and then that I could trace her meaning, which expressive pantomime did much to explain.

I tried to convince her that what she deemed a treasure was a mere pittance, which a week or two would exhaust; that I was no prince, nor had I a kingly father; "and last of all," said I, "I am not in pursuit of a princess. But I'll tell you what I am in search of, Catinka: one trusting, faithful, loving heart; one that will so unite itself to mine, as to have no joys, or sorrows, or cares, but mine; one content to go wherever I go, live however I live, and no matter what my faults may be, or how meanly others think of me, will ever regard me with eyes of love and devotion."

I had held her hand while I uttered this, gazing up into her eyes with ecstasy, for I saw how their liquid depth appeared to move as though about to overflow, when at last she spoke, and said,

"And there are no pearls!"

"Poor child!" thought I, "she cannot understand one word I have been saying. Listen to me, Catinka," said I, with a slow utterance.

"Would you give me your heart for all this treasure?"

"Si, si!" cried she, eagerly.

"And love me always—for ever?"

"Si," said she, again; but I fancied with less of energy than before.

"And when it was spent and gone, and nothing remaining of it, what would you do?"

"Send you to gather more, mio caro," said she, pressing my hand to her lips, as though in earnest of the blandishments she would bestow upon me.

Now, I cannot affect to say that all this was very reassuring. This poor simple child of the mountains showed a spirit as sordid and as calculating as though she were baptised in May-Fair. It was a terrible shock to me to see this; a dire overthrow to a very fine edifice that I was just putting the roof on! "Would Kate Herbert have made me such a speech?" thought I. "Would she have declared herself so venal and so worldly?—and why not? May it not be, perhaps, simply, that a mere question of good breeding, the usages of a polite world, might have made all the difference, and that she would have felt what poor Catinka felt and owned to. If this were true, the advantages were all on the side of sincerity. With honesty as the basis, what may not one build up of character? Where there is candour there are at least no disappointments. This poor simple child, untutored in the wiles of a scheming world, where all is false, unreal, and deceptive, has the courage to say that her heart can be bought. She is ready in her innocence, too, to sell it, just as the Indians sell a great territory for a few glass beads or bright buttons. And why should not I make the acquisition in the very spirit of a new settler? It was I discovered this lone island of the sea; it was I first landed on this unknown shore; why not claim a sovereignty so cheaply established?" I put the question arithmetically before me: Given, a young girl, totally new to life and its seductions, deeply impressed with the value of wealth, to find the measure of venality in a well brought-up young lady, educated at Clapham, and finished at Boulogne-sur-Mer. I expressed it thus: $D-y=T+x$, or an unknown quantity.

"What strange marks are you drawing there?" cried she, as I made these figures on the slate.

"A caprice," said I, in some confusion.

"No," said she; "I know better. It was a charm. Tell truth—it was a charm."

"A charm, dearest; but for what?"

"I know," said she, shaking her head and laughing, with a sort of wicked drollery.

"You know! Impossible, child."

"Yes," she said, with great gravity, while she swept her hand across the slate and erased all the figures. "Yes, I know, and I'll not permit it."

"But what, in Heaven's name, is trotting through your head, Catinka? You have not the vaguest idea of what those signs meant."

"Yes," she said, even more solemnly than before. "I know it all. You mean to steal away my heart in spite of me, and you are going to do it with a charm."

"And what success shall I have, Catinka?"

"Oh, do not ask me," said she, in a tone of touching misery. "I feel it very very sore here." And she pressed her hand to her side. "Ah me," sighed she, "if there were only pearls!"

The ecstasy her first few words gave me was terribly routed by this vile conclusion, and I started up abruptly, and, in an angry voice, said, "Let us go on; Vaterchen will fear we are lost."

"And all this gold; what shall I do with it?" cried she.

"What you will. Throw it into the well if you like," said I, angrily; for in good sooth I was out of temper with her, and myself, and all mankind.

"Nay," said she, mildly, "it is yours; but I will carry it for you if it weary you."

I might have felt rebuked by the submissive gentleness of her words; indeed, I know not how it was that they did not so move me, and I walked on in front of her, heedless of her entreaties that I should wait till she came up beside me.

When she did join me, she wanted to talk immensely. She had all manner of questions to ask about where my treasure came from; how often I went back there to replenish it; was I quite sure that it could never, never be exhausted, and such-like. But I was in no gracious mood for such inquiries, and telling her that I wished to follow my own thoughts without interruption, I walked along in silence.

I cannot tell the weight I felt at my heart. I am not speaking figuratively. No; it was exactly as though a great mass of heavy metal filled my chest, forced out my ribs, and pressed down my diaphragm; and though I held my hands to my sides with all my force, the pressure still remained.

"What a bitter mockery it is," thought I, "if the only false thing in all the world should be the human heart! There are diamonds that will resist fire, gold that will stand the crucible; but the moment you come to man and his affections, all is hollow and illusory!"

Why do we give the name worldliness to traits of selfish advancement and sordid gain, when a young creature like this, estranged from all the commerce of mankind, who knows nothing of that bargain-and-barter system which we call civilisation, reared and nurtured like a young fawn in her native woods, should, as though by a very instinct of corruption, have a heart as venal as any hackneyed beauty of three London seasons?

Let no man tell me now, that it is our vicious system of female training, our false social organisation, our spurious morality, laxity of family ties, and the rest of it. I am firmly persuaded that a young squaw of the Choctaws has as many auxiliaries about her "party" as any belle of Belgravia, even though the settlements be only paid in sharks' teeth and human toupees.

And what an absurdity is our whole code on this subject! A man is actually expected to court, solicit, and even worship the object that

he is after all called upon to pay for. You do not smirk at the salmon in your fishmonger's window, or ogle the lamb at your butcher's; you go in boldly and say, "How much the pound?" If you sighed outside for a week, you'd get it never the cheaper. Why not then make an honest market of what is so saleable? What a saving of time to know that the splendid creature yonder, with the queenly air, can only be had at ten thousand a year, but that the spicy article with the black ringlets will go for two! Instead of all the heart-burnings and blank disappointments we see now, we should have a practical, contented generation; and in the same spirit that a man of moderate fortune turns away from the seductions of turtle and white-bait, while he orders home his mutton chop, he would avert his gaze from beauty, and fix his affections on the dumpy woman that can be "got a bargain."

Why did not the poet say, *Venality, thy name is Woman?* It would suit the prosody about as well, and the purpose better. The Turks are our masters in all this; they are centuries—whole centuries in advance of us. How I wish some Babbage would make a calculation of the hours, weeks, years, centuries of time, are lost in what is called love-making. Time, we are told, is money, and here, at once, is the fund to pay off our national debt. Take the "time that's lost in wooing" by a nation, say of twenty-eight or thirty millions, and at the cheapest rate of labour—take the prison rate if you like—and see if I be not right. Let the population who now heave sighs, pound oyster-shells, let those who pick quarrels, pick oakum, and we need no income-tax!

"I'll not sing any more," broke in Catinka. "I don't think you have been listening to me."

"Listening to you!" said I, contemptuously; "certainly not. When I want a siren, I take a pit ticket and go to the Opera; seven-and-sixpence is the price of Circe, and dear at the money." With this rude rebuff I waved her off, and walked along once more alone.

At a sudden bend of the road we found Vaterchen seated under a tree waiting for us, and evidently not a little uneasy at our long absence.

"What is this?" said he, angrily, to Catinka. "Why have you remained so long behind?"

"We sat down to rest at a well," said she, "and then he took out a great bag of money to count, and there was so much in it, so many pieces of bright gold, that one could not help turning them over and over, and gazing at them."

"And worshipping them too, girl!" cried he, indignantly, while he turned on me a look of sorrow and reproach. I returned his stare haughtily, and he arose and drew me to one side.

"Am I, then, once more mistaken in my judgment of men? Have you, too, duped me?" said he, in a voice that shook with agitation. "Was it for this you offered us the solace of your companionship? Was it for this you con-

descended to journey with us, and deigned to be our host and entertainer?"

The appeal came at an evil moment: a vile, contemptible scepticism was at work within me. The rasp and the file of Doubt were eating away at my heart, and I deemed "all men liars."

"And is it to me—Potts—you address such words as these, you consummate old humbug? What is there about me that denotes dupe or fool?"

The old man shook his head, and made a gesture to imply he had not understood me; and now I remembered that I had uttered this rude speech in English and not in German. With the memory of this fact came also the consciousness of its cruel meaning. What if I should have wronged him? What if the poor old fellow be honest and upright? What if he be really striving to keep this girl in the path of virtue? I came close to him, and fixed my eyes steadfastly on his face. He looked at me fearlessly, as an honest man might look. He never tried to turn away, nor did he make the slightest effort to evade me. He seemed to understand all the import of my scrutiny, for he said at last,

"Well, are you satisfied?"

"I am, Vaterchen," said I, "fully satisfied. Let us be friends." And I took his hand and shook it heartily.

"You think me honest?" asked he.

"I do think so."

"And I am not more honest than she is. 'No,'" said he, resolutely, "Tintefleck is true-hearted."

"What of me?" cried she, coming up and leaning her arm on the old man's shoulder—"what of me?"

"I have said that you are honest, and would not deceive!"

"Not you, Vaterchen—not you," said she, kissing him. And then, as she turned away, she gave me a look so full of meaning, and so strange withal, that if I were to speak for an hour I could not explain it. It seemed to mean sorrow and reproach and wounded pride, with a dash of pity, and, above all and everything, defiance: ay, that was its chief character, and I believe I winced under it.

"Let us step out briskly," said Vaterchen. "Constance is a good eleven miles off yet."

"He looks tired already," said she, with a glance at me.

"I? I'm as fresh as when I started," said I. And I made an effort to appear brisk and lively, which only ended in making them laugh heartily.

CHARLES DICKENS.—It should be remembered that all the writings of Charles Dickens are prepared for and first make their appearance in *ALL THE YEAR ROUND*. His "Tale of Two Cities" appeared in the 1st and 2d volumes, "Journeys of the Uncommercial Traveler" in the 3d, and the new novel, "Great Expectations," will appear in the 4th, commencing in the monthly part for February, 1861.

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